[Mr. K. P. Raman Pillai.]

extra men. It is only a question of additional funds and I do not know whether this Council will sanction extra funds for the purpose. It is no doubt a very good proposition but we have to cut our coat according to our cloth.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): I wish to know whether the Commissioner could not have this work done by the Income Tax Inspectors provided competent men are appointed.

MR. S. C. H. ROBINSON (*Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): That is not their duty. Their duty is to gather information in respect of a man's income.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): My point is whether, in case qualified men are appointed to the post of Income Tax Inspectors, they cannot also do the work of auditing in the office of the Collectors.

MR. S. C. H. ROBINSON (*Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): You will have to appoint men on higher pay. I do not think that the present Inspectors possess the requisite knowledge. Two of them are graduates.

PRESIDENT: The Inspectors may not have time.

MR. S. C. H. ROBINSON (*Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): That is also a question to be considered. It certainly means more money.

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Neyyattinkara*): I withdraw the motion.

Motion 42.

The following motion was not made:

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR:

42. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 16,700 for Taxes on Income by Rs. 100.

PRESIDENT: The question is that a sum not exceeding Rs. 17 lakh be granted for Demand II, Taxes on Income.

The grant was made.

DEMAND III—EXCISE.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I beg to move for a grant not exceeding Rs. 5·17 lakhs under Demand III—Excise Department.

Motion 43.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): Sir, I beg to make the following motion:—

43. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 6,955 for inspection under III A—salt factories.

There was a good deal of discussion during the last budget debate about the extraordinary expenditure under establishment charges in the

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various branches under the Excise Commissioner and it was fairly conceded that a considerable reduction is possible in the expenditure under this item. During the course of the discussion, Mr. Krishna Aiyangar observed :

"I maintain that there is scope for reduction in the strength of the controlling staff".

I particularly emphasise this because he, besides being the Deputy President, has been a prominent member of the Salaries Committee, and as such, had ample opportunities of seeing the inner working of the various departments, which the Committee tried to put on some common platform. We find that, in the budget estimates for 1099, there are 7 Inspectors provided for, besides one Sub-Inspector. Mr. Van Ross told us last year that these Inspectors are required for looking after *alloms*, five of them at Tamaracolam, one at the Rajakkamangalam *allom* and one at the Colachel *allom*. We have not been able to know what these Inspectors were doing last year, and I have again to repeat the complaint that, unless the departmental heads take the trouble of supplying us with their administration reports, it will not be possible for us to know what they are doing with the money that has been granted.

PRESIDENT : The year is not yet over, Mr. Raman Pillai.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*) : They could have given us the administration reports for 1097. Except the Director of Agriculture and the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies, no heads of departments would show us their reports, probably as there is nothing for their taking credit or there may be something discreditable in the administration. Whatever that be, they make it a secret. Anyhow, we find in 1097 in all the 8 *allo ns* in Tamaracolam there was a decrease in the production of salt by 1,26,510 maunds, while the production of salt in the *allom* at Rajakkamangalam was about 11,000 maunds and in that at Colachel 40 maunds. I do not know if Mr. Van Ross will contend that he wants an Inspector to look after an *allo n* which produces 40 maunds and another to look after one which produces 11,000 maunds; nor would there be any justification for having so many as five Inspectors at Tamaracolam when the production of salt is steadily decreasing. It is also to be noticed that the *allom* at Rajakkamangalam is only 56 acres and odd in extent, while that at Colachel is only 40 acres and odd, so that the total area under salt manufacture which has to be supervised by one Assistant Commissioner, eight Inspectors and one Sub-Inspector is only 419 acres. That works out to less than 50 acres per Inspector. In spite of the vigilant and effective supervision for which these persons are insisted upon, we find that the average yield per acre also fell from 1,376 maunds in 1096 to 1,011 maunds in 1097. On the other hand, we find the expenditure is steadily going up. The expenditure under establishment in 1097 was Rs. 8,220. The revised estimate for 1098 shows that Rs. 10,200 was required for establishment, while this year the amount budgeted is Rs. 12,868 *plus* Rs. 848 for one Sub-Inspector. The expenditure is thus about Rs. 5,000 more than what it was in 1097 in spite of the decrease in revenue. This increase in expenditure is

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[Mr. A. J. Van Ross.]

due to the increase of the staff by four Inspectors and one Sub-Inspector. I submit, Sir, that this additional staff is not justified under any circumstance whatsoever.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Sir, I have not understood Mr. Raman Pillai. He said that there has been an increase in the staff of the Inspectors.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): It is the increase in the number of Inspectors from four to seven.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): There has been no increase.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): Sir, I find, in the budget estimate for 1099, that there are seven Inspectors, three on Rs. 100 to 125 and four on Rs. 60 to 90, besides a Sub-Inspector.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): There was in the last year also the same number of Inspectors.

MR. S. SUBRAHMANYA KARAYALAR (*Pattanapuram* cum *Shencottah*): A new *allom* has been opened at Variyoor.

PRESIDENT: The new Sub-Inspector is for the Variyoor *allom*.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): The staff of Inspectors has been increased from four to eight.

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): This year also there are only seven.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): Sir, it is for the Commissioner to explain the increase of Rs. 3,600 in the current year's expenditure. I find there has been no increase in number.

PRESIDENT: Mr. Van Ross.

MR. S. SUBRAHMANYA KARAYALAR (*Pattanapuram* cum *Shencottah*): Sir, is it not a fact —

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Alla'apuzha*): Is he in order, Sir?

PRESIDENT: I am pointing out to him that he is not in order.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): The question of the number of Excise Inspectors in the Salt Factories Division was discussed at great length at the last budget debate in this Council and the House was good enough to pass the demand. Of the seven Inspectors, two Inspectors are at Colachel and Rajakkamangalam and these officers cannot be done away with as they are isolated factories, and not connected with any other factory.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): Will Mr. Van Ross be pleased to tell us the distance between the two *allom*s?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): About five miles. The Colachel Inspector is also doing the work of the Sea Customs

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Inspector there. We cannot do away with these two Inspectors. Then there remains —

MR. K. V. NATESA AIYAR (*Chief Engineer*): The distance is eight or nine miles.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): I cannot hear.

PRESIDENT: Mr. Van Ross states that the Salt Factories Inspector at Colachel is in charge of the sea customs work also.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): Sir, may I know the income from the customs office at Colachel?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I have not got the figure ready.

PRESIDENT: Mr. Van Ross, can you not give an approximate estimate of the annual receipts from that port?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Yes. It is given in the Administration Report.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Chief Secretary to Government*): Royalty on the monazite imported from Colachel is also paid there.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): The work of the Colachel Inspector does not consist merely in dealing with imports. Much work has to be done as there are frequent exports.

Then there remain only five Inspectors.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): What is the nature of the imports?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): The imports from Ceylon are iron ware, arecanut, etc.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): What is the kind of dutiable imports?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): The imports are generally more or less, iron materials, arecanut, and other things.

Then there are five Inspectors for Tamaracolam. Since last Karkatakam, two more factories have been opened up and the works are nearly complete. They are expected to begin manufacture in the Purattasi *pani* of 1099. Thus the number of factories has increased from eight to ten and there are only five Inspectors. Owing to the doubling of the salt duty a wider gap now exists between the *kudivila* and the sale price and consequently the inducement for theft of salt has increased two-fold. Redoubled and unremitting vigilance has to be maintained to prevent loss of revenue to Government by theft. Salt heaps have to be daily inspected and night guard duty has to be carefully checked, and all available hands are consequently very necessary. I am therefore unable to agree to any reduction in the number of Inspectors and would request the House to kindly pass the demand.

I find that the receipt from customs at the Colachel port was Rs. 4,025 in 1095. Later figures are not available.

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[Mr. T. K. Velu Pillai.]

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): Sir, I wish to accord my support to Mr. Raman Pillai's motion. There has been an agitation for a very long time in this country that Travancore should be made self-supporting in the production of salt. It cannot be quite feasible in the near future to do so. The Government, however, opened enough salt depôts which would show the anxiety of Government to meet the popular point of view and they have adopted the suggestion of those who agitated the question; and they are also prepared to render timely help to people who are prepared to put their money in the business of salt manufacture. The Variyoor *allom* which had been once abandoned was taken up. Whatever may be the honesty of Government in the encouragement of salt manufacture in Travancore, I am not quite satisfied that these half-hearted measures will redound to the benefit of the revenue. The Variyoor *allom* was being worked for a considerable time before it was abandoned and as it had been abandoned, the ordinary presumption is that no proper use could be made of it, and that the salt manufactured there was either too small in quantity or that it would not sell. As a matter of fact, Variyoor salt was not found to be quite so good as the Rajakkamangalam or Tamaracolam salt. To me the abolition and subsequent reopening of the Variyoor *allom* has come as a surprise. The Government, Sir, have not been very careful in finding the possibilities of these abandoned *allums* before they expend money again on them. The knowledge of the process of salt manufacture possessed by the Salt Inspectors and some of the Assistant Commissioners is not very high. It is also unfortunate that although one officer—probably there are others—was deputed to other places where he picked up some knowledge regarding salt manufacture, that officer's services have not been utilised in the salt *allums*. On the other hand, a square man is put into a round hole. I fail to see the wisdom of getting people trained at Government cost for a particular work and then posting them anywhere else. The Excise Department is bound to utilise a trained man's services to the best advantage. I do not think that one who has come back after training in salt manufacture can be sent to do other work with profit.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): Sir, I want a ruling as to whether the member is in order in dilating on the general policy with regard to salt manufacture, when the motion relates to the abolition of Inspectors.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): I think, Sir, I am perfectly relevant. I am dilating on that point because when Mr. Raman Pillai—

PRESIDENT: I have not ruled you out of order. So you may go on, Mr. Velu Pillai.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): So, I need not explain it any further. I would, however, refer to the possibility of manufacturing salt from the Kayankulam lake. I understand that

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Kayankulam lake salt will be sufficient in quantity and will not be deleterious in any measure. Whether Government have got the question of salt manufacture examined by really competent men from outside who know the economic and mechanical business of salt manufacture, is not known. All that I wish to say is that it may be taken up as a specific question by really competent men and a settled salt policy must be started. Sir, regarding the appointment of Inspectors in the salt factories, I am not quite sure, if in a small *allom* an Inspector should get a high pay. These Inspectors in the *allems* have got certain other sources of income. If there is salt in the godowns—

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Sir, I wish to know from Mr. T. K. Velu Pillai whether it is a recognised income. If so, what is the income that he is referring to?

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): I am saying that they are getting an illicit and illegal income.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): If any such thing is brought to my notice, it will be put a stop to and the delinquent punished.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): I am glad that my friend Mr. Van Ross has given the assurance and I hope that in case the culprits are found, they will be brought to book.

PRESIDENT: May I draw your attention to the time limit?

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): It may be left to the officer on the spot to find out all causes of such illicit action. The Commissioner is at Trivandrum and the Assistant Commissioners are the men on the spot. That is why cases rarely come to the Commissioner's notice. As a matter of fact, I know from very reliable persons in this House—I do not wish to disclose names—that these Salt Inspectors are putting the contractors to very great difficulty unless they pay two chackrams or so for every sack. If the levy is not paid, the Inspector would be giving out lame excuses that he is suffering from tooth-ache or other indisposition and therefore unable to look after the matter. All these things do exist. Of course, I do not want to press the point any further in the face of the very earnest assurance the Excise Commissioner has given. I do not want to say anything further on the point except that these *allems* need looking into and should possess the services of an expert. If we have not got experts in the service now, somebody has to be sent out for training so that he may come back to Travancore with a really efficient knowledge which will be of use in the manufacture of salt. I am also constrained to request that, if there is an officer trained to do the work, that officer should be made to do that work and none else.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): Sir, it is a matter for great pleasure to see a quondam Excise Inspector speak so vehemently about excise matters, particularly salt.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): Sir, I was not in charge of any salt factories.

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[Mr. T. K. Velu Pillai.]

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): I said excise officer and not salt officer. There is one Assistant Commissioner besides seven Inspectors and one Sub-Inspector in charge of the salt factories. I should be the last person to support this motion if the money asked for is being put to proper use. It took the breath out of me when I heard that only 40 maunds of salt are being manufactured in the Colachel *a'lom*, and that an Inspector is in charge of the factory. Mr. Van Ross is not able to tell us, when questioned from the Chair, what the nature of the exports and imports is.

PRESIDENT: No such question was put from the Chair. (*Laughter.*)

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): I beg your pardon, Sir. Mr. Velu Pillai said something about the Rajakkamangalam *allom*. If it is to be kept in working order something must be done for preventing the percolation of fresh water from the Pazhayar. If it is going to be abandoned, the sooner it is done the better. With regard to the Variyoor *a'lom*, the experiment was made some time ago and it was found to be an utterly useless *allom*. Now it has been resuscitated. I do not know how the conditions have now changed. It was supposed to be perfectly useless and it was closed. Now it has been opened again. With regard to the salt manufactured in many of these *allom*s, there is not the smallest doubt that the quantity as well as the quality is going down. The other day some salt was brought to my house for domestic purposes and I found it to be dirty salt, filth more than salt.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I wish to know whether the salt he spoke about was purchased from the depôt or from the retail vendor.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): It was purchased from the bazaar.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Then I am not responsible.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): No attempt whatever seems to have been made with regard to the improvement of salt manufacture. I see from the answers given to my interpellation that nothing whatever is being done to analyse salt whether in the factories or anywhere else. Salt, Sir, is a dangerous thing to consume, if not properly manufactured.

PRESIDENT: That is not strictly correct. I remember the answer to the interpellation.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): Only two experiments have been made during these several years and the laboratory in Tamaracolam is a thing of the past.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum cum Nedumangad*): Have all these experiments been conducted by Inspectors who are chemistry graduates?

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MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): Probably one experiment was conducted by Mr. Nilakandan, a chemistry graduate, who is the only officer who knows anything about salt. With many apologies to the Excise Commissioner and the Assistant Commissioners, I may say that hardly anybody in the salt factories has a real knowledge of salt manufacture.

PRESIDENT: That statement is really incorrect. I remember the answer to the interpellation that the experiment was made by the Chemical Examiner.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): By Mr. Nilakandan, probably. (*Laughter.*) No attempt has been made to improve the quality of salt. The demand is increasing, but no serious attempt is being made to increase the quantity either. Mr. Velu Pillai spoke about the Kayankulam lake and the tremendous possibility of manufacturing salt in central Travancore. Once upon a time there were factories there and the salt manufactured there may not have been found to be the best quality. With improved methods of salt manufacture, it is quite possible to manufacture good salt there. Even if the quality is not good, it could be used for fish-curing and industrial purposes.

PRESIDENT: I must tell the Council that we ought not to discuss the salt policy in connection with this particular motion.

MR. PAUL V. DANIEL (*Agastisvaram*): Sir, I also have some personal knowledge of the Variyoor *allom*, and I feel bound to say a word or two in this connection. Since the time when the dry lands were converted into wet lands, the licensees of the Variyoor *allom* neglected the manufacture of salt in it. So the quantity of salt manufactured went far below what was expected. There was no co-operation among the licensees, but now it has come into the hands of a single individual. I am myself so bold as to say that he has done a good deal by way of improvement to the *allom*. I fully believe that the *allom* will sooner or later be a success. Then with regard to the reduction of Inspectors, I do not think that Mr. K. P. Raman Pillai is right in asking for a reduction at the present time.

MR. M. N. PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): I wish to know from Mr. Daniel whether any one of his relations is employed as an Inspector or Sub Inspector in these *alloms*.

PRESIDENT: I must object to that question.

MR. PAUL V. DANIEL (*Agastisvaram*): As a matter of fact, some of my relations owned more than 50 per cent. of the pans in the Variyoor *allom*. They were deprived of the benefit of the Variyoor *allom* by the present licensee of the *allom*.

MR. M. N. PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): I do not mean the Variyoor *allom*.

PRESIDENT: I do not think it arises.

MR. PAUL V. DANIEL (*Agastisvaram*): None of my relations is an Inspector or a Sub-Inspector in any of the salt *alloms* where a reduction is sought.

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[Mr. A. J. Van Ross.]

PRESIDENT: You need not answer that.

MR. PAUL V. DANIEL (*Agastisvaram*): Considering the high price of salt and the low cost of its production, I think, in the interest of the revenue to the Government, it will be quite inadvisable to make any reduction in the staff of Inspectors.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): Will Mr. Daniel tell us the possible maximum quantity that may be manufactured in the Variyoor *allom*?

MR. PAUL V. DANIEL (*Agastisvaram*): My sincere hope is that it will be successful. The State can get about Rs. 20,000 this year; and there is the prospect of getting more hereafter.

MR. S. SUBRAHMANYA KARAYALAR (*Pattanapuram* cum *Shencottah*): Sir, I beg to propose to reduce one Inspector in the Tamaracolam salt factories for the following reasons:

Now we have one Inspector for Puttallom, one for the Srimulagopalanathan *allom* and a third for the Srimulakrishnamani *allom* and the Srisankara *allom*. There is no necessity for a separate Inspector for Puttallom because the salt manufactured in that *allom* entirely belongs to Government and there is no sale on the licensee's account. But as there is licensee's sale in Srisankara *allom*, one Inspector can be in charge of both *alloms*. Now the Inspector in charge of Srisankara *allom* is also in charge of Srimulakrishnamani *allom*. While there is licensees' sale in both *alloms* the licensees are put to considerable difficulties when sales are effected in both factories. To avoid these, one Inspector may be placed in charge of Srimulagopalanathan and Srimulakrishnamani *alloms* as both *alloms* belong to one and the same individual. The licensee of these two *alloms* can serve under one master instead of two under the present arrangement. Under the above circumstances, I propose to reduce one Inspector and appoint only two for the above four *alloms* for the reasons stated above.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): The only point that requires consideration is that the Colachel Inspector is in charge of the sea customs also and therefore could not be spared. My answer to that objection is that the charges under establishment in customs are themselves too high. It is about three and a half per cent. of the income, and therefore, I submit, that it must be possible for Mr. Van Ross to give relief on account of the extra work in customs, and after all it appears to be a very small matter. I have only to draw the attention of the House to the expert opinion which Mr. Karayalar has brought to bear on the House in the matter. Considering the small reduction that I propose, *viz.*, Rs. 300 a month, which is quite reasonable, I think it will be acceptable to the House.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): In regard to what Mr. Karayalar said just now, I may state that it is with considerable inconvenience that the Srisankara *allom* and the Srimulakrishnamani *allom*

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are being worked by one Inspector. Mr. Karayalar said that there are no sales in the Puttallom factory. There are sales there and it is a large factory yielding a lakh.

MR. S. SUBRAHMANYA KARAYALAR (*Pattanapuram* cum *Shencottah*): All the salt there belongs to Government. They can only be transported. No sale is effected.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Even last year, salt was sold there.

MR. S. SUBRAHMANYA KARAYALAR (*Pattanapuram* cum *Shencottah*): That will be against the recommendation of the Excise Commissioner himself. The salt there is Government salt and it can either be transported or stored as reserve. It is not for sale.

PRESIDENT: Government can sell the salt there.

MR. S. SUBRAHMANYA KARAYALAR (*Pattanapuram* cum *Shencottah*): Government do not sell there.

PRESIDENT: They can, if it is necessary.

MR. S. SUBRAHMANYA KARAYALAR (*Pattanapuram* cum *Shencottah*): Salt is for reserve and not for sale.

PRESIDENT: What is the object of keeping salt in reserve? Is it to keep down the price of salt?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Will the member refer me to any Government order prohibiting the sale of salt there?

MR. S. SUBRAHMANYA KARAYALAR (*Pattanapuram* cum *Shencottah*): I think the Excise Commissioner has recommended that the salt should be reserved there against the contingengeny of the licensees raising the price.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): May I know whether any sale is effected now in that particular place?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Yes.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): Will the member be pleased to say how many maunds were sold last year?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): 70,000 maunds were sold the year before last. As regards last year, I have not got the figures ready.

As I said already, this is a time when special care has to be taken to prevent theft of salt. The Inspector has to see that the guards do their work properly and that no theft is taking place.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): Will Mr. Van Ross be pleased to state how many cases of theft were found out last year?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I have not got the figures ready. I will call for them and place them before the House.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): Will Mr. Van Ross be pleased to say whether the Excise Inspector is living near the *alloms*?

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[Mr. T. K. Velu Pillai.]

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): How could he do so? You refused to give him quarters.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): Before the quarters are provided, I wish to know whether the Inspector is on duty at night?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): There are men posted there on guard duty and they have often to take shelter in sheds that are open on all sides.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): The Excise Commissioner presumes that they are doing their duty?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): When they fail in their duty and when thefts take place, we punish the men responsible for that.

Regarding the criticism of Mr. Raman Pillai, as regards the fall in the revenue under Salt, the salt manufacture in Travancore depends upon the weather conditions. One year we have continuous dry weather and that year the outturn is very good. In 1097 we had untimely rains and that interfered considerably with the outturn.

As regards the Variyoor *allom*, it was owned by about 21 petty licensees and there were several reasons for its downfall in the past. One was that the irrigation of the surrounding places affected the salt-pans by percolation of fresh water and the private owners were not able to cope with the drainage work necessary there. Now the factory has been taken up by a private gentleman and he is doing all the work at his own cost and without any expenditure to the Government. In the course of about one and a half months he has manufactured about 2,000 maunds of salt from an area of about 3 acres.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): I wish to know whether it was worked at Government cost or by a private individual.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): It was a Government monopoly factory where the work had to be done by Government. Now it is being done by a private individual at his own risk. Government have only to maintain a small establishment to safeguard the revenue. That factory will yield about 10,000 maunds of salt, in which case we expect about Rs. 25,000, from that little factory alone.

With regard to the point about the man trained in salt, or who may be called a salt expert, I am not prepared to grant that. Mr. Nilakandan is an expert. He was deputed to inspect some factories in British India. That, I think, cannot be said to have given him expert knowledge.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): Has any Excise Commissioner recommended that there should be a salt expert in Travancore?

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MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): No, so far as I know there has been no such recommendation. My predecessor has also said that no salt expert is needed. The manufacture of salt is very well known to the people at work in the factories and the officers are expected only to supervise that work.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): I will read a portion from the Administration Report for 1097:—

"Besides the worm pest, owing to the premature and intermittent rainfall, the year was not favourable to salt manufacture".

Is there any qualified agency in the department which can deal with this pest, find out its cause and remedy the evil?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): The worm pest comes when there is not sufficient saline matter. If the salinity is increased, the worm will naturally disappear.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): I want definite information as to whether a scientific man, preferably a chemistry graduate, will not be able to find out the cause and also the remedy for the same.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Probably he may be able to find out some chemical which might remove the worms. The usual process is to make the land sufficiently saline. The worms will then disappear. That is the natural remedy.

With regard to Mr. Nilakandan, he has some knowledge of salt industry. When I took charge, Mr. Nilakandan was at Piravam and Mr. Govinda Pillai was in charge of the salt factory. We cannot pin a man down to a particular place. He should be given some relief. He was in the factory for some time and I thought that in order to give him relief he should be transferred from the factory.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): I wish to know whether Mr. Nilakandan was consulted when he was transferred.

MR. A J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I have not got the information because I did not transfer him. I thought he was transferred in the usual course of things.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): My point is whether it would not be better for the department to have a qualified man in charge of the salt factories.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): It would be very much better if one or two men are sent to British India to study salt manufacture; but it is not indispensable.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): I wish to know whether salt is being analysed in British India from time to time.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I am not aware of that.

With regard to the Colachel *allom* it has fallen from its once flourishing condition. The *allom* has been spoiled by the percolation

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[Mr. K. P. Raman Pillai]

of fresh water from the surrounding places. Since I took charge, good work is being done there to stop percolation. The Chief Engineer is bestowing special attention to the matter and by Purattasi the *allom* will be in good working order. Money is being spent to make proper drainage channels and in 1099 the outturn will be very good there. There has been some delay on the part of the P. W. D. But the works are now in progress and I expect that in a month's time the work will be complete.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): Will the Excise Commissioner agree to axe at least one of the Inspectors ?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I have given the matter very careful consideration. Probably next year we may require more men.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): I wish to know whether it would not be desirable to experiment in the Kayankulam lake.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I must confess I have not made any enquiry in the matter but from old records I find that the salt from the Kayankulam lake is absolutely unfit for human consumption, being black and muddy. It is not even fit for fish curing.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): I wish to know whether experiments cannot be made in new methods of manufacturing salt. I have seen myself that in British India they are trying new methods—the Bombay method, the Italian method and so on. I wish to know whether any such experiments could not be made here, so that in the near future Travancore may become self-contained.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I would ask the member if he would not wait till we bring the existing *allowns* into perfection before we take up the Kayankulam lake. We have plenty of work to do in the old factory itself.

PRESIDENT: Do you press your motion to a division, Mr. Raman Pillai ?

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): Yes, Sir.

The motion was then put to the vote and was lost, 13 voting *for* and 26 *against*.

Motion 44.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): Sir, I beg to make the following motion:

44. To omit the allotment of Rs. 480 for one Sub-Inspector.

I submit that, in the light of the fact that it has not been possible to make a reduction in the number of Inspectors in charge of the salt factories, Mr. Van Ross will not object to this small reduction

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MR. S. SUBRAHMANYA KARAYALAR (*Pattanapuram* cum *Shencottah*): I oppose the motion on the ground that one Sub-Inspector is absolutely necessary for the Variyoor *allom*, because the Inspectors in the other salt factories will not be able to check the work at Variyoor.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): There is nothing in the budget to show that this Sub-Inspector is for Variyoor. I would request Mr. Karayalar to give me the source from which he got the information.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): There is a footnote in the printed budget.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): I oppose the motion.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): As I have already said, this is a factory which has been newly resuscitated and it is likely to yield something like Rs. 25,000 every year and it is impossible to manage the factory without having some superior officer to safeguard Government revenue. I am sorry I am unable to accept the cut.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): I have only to point out that it will be quite possible for the Commissioner to transfer one of these seven Inspectors to the Variyoor *allom* and make him look after that. I am sorry Mr. Karayalar himself who suggested that one Inspector might be removed from the Tamaracolam factory is now opposing the motion on the ground that one Sub-Inspector is absolutely necessary for the Variyoor *allom* which has not produced anything in 1097.

PRESIDENT: It was not in existence in 1097.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): But in the statistics volume given to us the name has been put in and it is said to be 22 acres and 42 cents in extent, producing nothing. Therefore even Mr. Karayalar would admit that by the transfer of a Sub-Inspector from Tamaracolam to Variyoor the problem could be very easily solved. I therefore press the motion.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): In the discussion with regard to the Tamaracolam Salt Factory, it was distinctly said that five Inspectors are required at Tamaracolam and the House was kind enough to pass that.

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Neyyattinkara*): Is it not possible to transfer one from Tamaracolam?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I said it is not possible because, for the ten factories at Tamaracolam, five Inspectors are absolutely necessary.

PRESIDENT: Do you press your motion to a division?

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): Yes, Sir.

The motion was put to the vote and lost, 8 voting *for* and 26 *against*.

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[Mr. M. R. Madhava Variar.]

Motion 45.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): Sir, I beg to make the following motion:

45. To omit the allotment of Rs. 1,344 for leave allowances.

Hitherto 'leave allowances' was not an item in the budget. At any rate, in the last budget it was not an item. Hitherto the leave allowances were paid from the savings or treated as inevitable charges. The Financial Secretary says that specific provision for leave allowances is necessary and that, though past experience shows that the reserve provision will not be required in most of the departments, he has set apart Rs. 2½ lakhs for the purpose.

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): I beg to point out that the Council has passed these leave allowances in the case of the Land Revenue Department yesterday.

PRESIDENT: That has already been passed. The member is objecting to the item here. This relates to Excise.

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): The principle is the same.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): If the Financial Secretary or the Excise Commissioner wants any additional grant, he can come to the Council and apply for a supplementary grant afterwards. Last year there was a saving of about Rs. 2¼ lakhs under salaries, because the salaries of officers were calculated on the averages and not on the actuals. This year also I think the provision for salaries is in excess of the actual requirements. So there will be savings under salaries which could very well be utilised for meeting the leave allowances. On this ground I move that the allotment for leave allowances be omitted.

MR. M. N. PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): I second it.

PRESIDENT: These motions do not require seconding.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): This expenditure is always to be met from year to year. It is only this year, however, that a specific provision is made in the budget. I do not see any objection in this harmless provision. Men are likely to take leave and they should be paid.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): Will there not be any saving?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Usually the average is taken into account. This time the actuals have been calculated.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): There are possibilities of saving, this time also. If I am asked

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to explain, I can give specific instances. As regards the English Professors of the Arts College, provision is made for three English Professors on Rs. 400 – 750. Now there are only two and the scale of their salary has been reduced to Rs. 300—700.

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): That was after the budget was presented.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): Anyhow, there will be a saving and that might be utilised for leave allowances.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I have nothing more to say in this matter.

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): (Standing).

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Neyyattinkara*): I wish to know from Mr. George—

PRESIDENT: You cannot ask him a question before he begins to speak. He is not in possession of the House now.

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): Prior to this budget we were not making any provision for leave allowances. The leave allowances have been budgeted now, not with the idea of avoiding coming to the Council. The budget must provide for necessary items.

MR. N. PADMANABHA PILLAI (*Karunagapalli*): Supposing there is any excess, is not the department entitled to utilise the same for some other item without coming to the Council?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): Under the rules they can do so. But I have distinctly stated that Government have decided not to appropriate savings in future. The existence of the provision does not help or hinder anything. So I think there is no harm in passing it.

PRESIDENT: Do you still press your motion, Mr. Madhava Variar?

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Patanamtitta*): No, Sir.

The motion was by leave withdrawn.

Motions 46 to 48.

The following motions were not made:

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI:

46. To omit the allotment of Rs. 1,270 for petty construction and repairs.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI:

47 To omit the allotment of Rs. 100 for purchase and repair of office furniture.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI:

48. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 750 for office expenses by Rs. 500.

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[Mr. G. Parameswaran Pillai.]

Motion 49.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): Sir, I beg to make the following motion:

49. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 2,850 for Inspectors by Rs. 1,200.

This amount is meant for the pay of three Inspectors in salt business. The House will know that the salt business has considerably decreased. It has fallen from 6½ lakhs of maunds of salt in 1096 to 6,47,000 maunds in 1097.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): May I request the member to refer me to the statement that he has quoted?

MR. K. P RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): I am referring to the Administration Report and Statistics Vols. II and III. Now there is no other circumstance which necessitates so many Inspectors. Mr. Karayalar has been given the contract for the monopoly to sell and transport salt, and I believe he is selling salt to almost the whole of the population in middle Travancore.

PRESIDENT: Only in Alleppey.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): All the taluks which come under the jurisdiction of the Alleppey Depôt.

PRESIDENT: No, no. There is no jurisdiction for the Alleppey Depôt.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): Anyhow he can sell salt to all people who have been buying from Alleppey. That means that the whole of middle Travancore is supplied by him. That being so, I do not think these Inspectors are necessary.

MR. S. SUBRAHMANYA KARAYALAR (*Pattanapuram* cum *Shencottah*): I oppose the motion. Mr. K. P. Raman Pillai has not understood the real situation. Mr. Karayalar has got the contract only to transport salt and an Excise Inspector is highly necessary to supervise and conduct the sale.

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Neyyattinkara*): I wish to know whether Mr. Karayalar has been given the contract for the transport of salt to Quilon.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Yes.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): I wish to know from Mr. Karayalar if he can sell his salt at Muvattupuzha or Chengannur.

MR. S. SUBRAHMANYA KARAYALAR (*Pattanapuram* cum *Shencottah*): There is no restriction as regards that. I can pay the duty, transport it to any place I like and sell.

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Neyyattinkara*): I wish to know whether Mr. Karayalar is not in a position to purchase any amount of salt from the Alleppey Depôt and sell it to retail merchants.

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MR. S. SUBRAHMANYA KARAYALAR (*Pattanapuram* cum *Shencottah*) : I can do it just like any other merchant.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*) : I wish to know whether Mr. Karayalar can give an assurance as contractor here, while as a matter of fact he is here as the elected representative of Shencottah.

PRESIDENT : He places his knowledge at the disposal of the Council.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*) : The depôt at Alleppey stocks Bombay and Tuticorin salt. Mr. Karayalar has the contract for the transport of Tuticorin salt to Alleppey and not of Bombay salt, while there is no local salt available. In both cases the sale is done in the depôt and if Mr. Karayalar has to take away salt from the depot, he would have to pay a very large sum. That would not be possible for any unless he invests a very large sum. So the sale is done in the depôt.

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Neyyattinkara*) : May I know whether, under the contract, he is to pay the duty only after the sale or before the sale ?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*) : Not, before the sale. And then it is issued from the depôt daily by the Inspector or other officer in charge. Government have got a lien on this salt till the duty is realised.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*) : May I know what is the price of the salt given to Mr. Karayalar ?

PRESIDENT : I do not think it arises.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*) : So an Inspector is wanted there for the storing and the sale of Bombay salt. Am I to understand that Mr. K. P. Raman Pillai is for the abolition of the Quilon Depôt also ?

PRESIDENT : The motion relates only to the cutting down of Rs. 1,00.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*) : I withdraw the motion.

The motion was by leave withdrawn.

Motion 50.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*) : I rise to move :

50. To omit the allotment of Rs. 1,368 for two petty officers and 15 peons.

PRESIDENT : Fifteen, I think, is a mistake. There are only five peons.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*) : I find in the budget that they are appointed for the whole of 1099. But I do not understand why they are so appointed. I understand that salt

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[A. Hoogewerf,]

issued from the Trivandrum Port Salt Depôt is very bad. So the merchants at Trivandrum are going to the Tamaracolam Depôt to purchase salt from there and sell it at higher prices. If the salt issued from the Port Salt Depôt is very bad, the merchants cannot purchase the salt from that place. I do not understand why a temporary establishment should be maintained for selling bad salt from the Port Salt Depôt.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): In the first place, I want to point out to the House that the salt stored in the Trivandrum Depôt is not bad since it is the same salt that the people from here purchase and bring from Tamaracolam.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): Why then do they go to Tamaracolam to purchase and bring it here?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I will explain that. Unfortunately when dry salt is brought from the salt factories and is stored here, the salt becomes moist and heavy, and that weighs more.

PRESIDENT: Takes in more measure for measure?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Yes; but the dry salt will take less in measure. So that the merchants from Trivandrum preferred to bring dry salt from factories. I sent the Assistant Excise Commissioner to find out the difference in measure between the two kinds of salt and he found there was a considerable difference.

That would probably be an argument that the depôt was not necessary.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): What is the condition of salt in the depôts in Quilon and Alleppey?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): There they have no other depôts. Here they can get it through the depôts.

MR. M. R. MADHAVAVARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): Are the merchants selling at a higher rate?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): They were selling at a higher rate when the Trivandrum depôt was closed in Makaram 1095, during the time of my predecessor.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): I beg to know from the member the facts relating to this decrease. Suppose 10,000 maunds of salt stored in are weighed out after one year or six months. Will the quantity be more or less?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I cannot say. Sometimes it weighs less, sometimes more. It may also be due to wastage. The depôt was closed in Makaram 1095.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): What is the wastage in the depôt?

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PRESIDENT: There is some wastage in handling. It has to be handled nevertheless.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Directly the depôt was closed, the effect was seen. The local traders raised the price because there was no check here. Immediately there were complaints and Mr. Adam Sait raised the question in the Legislative Council and on enquiry the grievance that the prices were high in Trivandrum was found to be true. The depôt was therefore reopened. So long as the depôt is here, it acts as a check upon the inflation of prices.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum cum Nedumangad*): I wish to ask whether the cost of transport of any quantity of salt by *pattamar* from Tamaracolam to Quilon is not less than the transport by land.

PRESIDENT: How does it arise?

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum cum Nedumangad*): Mr. Van Ross said that whether in Quilon or in Trivandrum people are dissatisfied with the salt. They come to Tamaracolam. My question is whether it is not cheaper to bring salt from Tamaracolam to Quilon by *pattamars*.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): The charges for bringing salt from the factories to Quilon will come to five annas a maund.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum cum Nedumangad*): I wish to know what would be the price now.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): It comes to about four annas a maund to Trivandrum. I understand that it comes to about eight annas a bag for transporting salt from the factories to Trivandrum by cart.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): Considering that the transport charge by cart is double that of transport by sea, would not the merchants prefer buying at the depôt?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I said four annas a maund to Trivandrum by sea.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): But the fact remains that when salt is transported by land to Trivandrum, the price of salt is higher than when it is brought by sea.

PRESIDENT: There is no question of sea or land. It costs about four annas per maund.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): He said six annas a bag.

PRESIDENT: Eight annas per bag.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (Nominated): May I know why merchants still go to the depôts?

PRESIDENT: He has already explained why merchants go to the depôts in spite of the transport charges.

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[Mr. N. Ramakrishna Pillai.]

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): The depôt is maintained here solely in the interests of the consuming public. Once the depôt is closed, prices would go up immediately.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): The question is not that. We want to know what justification there is for giving preferential treatment to some people in the capital at a cost of Rs. 1,368.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Not only the people of Trivandrum but those of the surrounding places also are benefited.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): Why should the general taxpayer pay for the preferential treatment of people here?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): We have the depôts at Quilon and Alleppey and salt can be got directly from the depôts by people elsewhere too.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): I wish to know whether it is to prevent the merchants in Trivandrum selling salt at very high rates that the depôt is maintained.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Prevention of profiteering is the main object. The poor people in the coast regions also find it very useful for fish-curing purposes.

The motion was by leave withdrawn.

Motions 51 to 53.

The following motions were not made: –

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI:

51. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 10,000 for petty construction and repairs by Rs. 3,000.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI:

52. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 34,500 for transport charges of salt by Rs. 9,500.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI:

53. To omit the allotment of Rs. 2,000 for office expenses and miscellaneous, including wastage of salt.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): I wish to know how Mr. K. P. Raman Pillai can withdraw his motions without having moved them.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): I do not move them. (*Laughter.*)

Motion 54.

MR. N. RAMAKRISHNA PILLAI (*Vaikam* cum *Ettumanur*): I beg to move:

54. To omit the allotment of Rs. 2,000 for office expenses and miscellaneous including wastage of salt.

An allotment of this kind has to be cut out in view of the fact that we have been purchasing machines year after year, and in view of the

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fact that several machines are already in the Excise Commissioner's office without being used. It is for this purpose that I propose the omission.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): The scales in my office are the Grainger's scales and cup scales. A few are kept in reserve. The scales that I want to buy are platform scales required at the gate of each factory and of each depôt and at the salt bankshalls in the Shencottah taluk. These are used every day and when they get worn out they become absolutely useless. Last year we supplied scales to Alleppey, Munambam and Shencottah. Four scales have been purchased this year for the Avadhanigal, Sri Sankara *Allom*, Variyoor *Allom* and Cape Comorin. We want scales at Quilon, the salt bankshalls at Elathur and Ayakudi and the Salt Factory. These scales are small scales and are used every day. Salt has a corroding effect on the balance and the knife edges and the scales become useless; so periodically, they have to be replaced.

MR. J. JOHN NIDIRY (*Changanacherry cum Minachil*): What is done with the old scales?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): They are auctioned. I have provided for this amount as more scales are necessary.

The motion was by leave withdrawn.

The following motion was not made :—

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI :—

55. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 1,000 for purchase of weights, etc., by Rs. 500.

Motion 56.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): I beg to make the following motion :

56. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 48,175 for Salt Factories by Rs. 100.

My object in making the motion is to draw the attention of the Government to the fact that sufficient importance is not being attached by the Excise Department to the production of home salt. The quantity produced is also not proportionate to the expenditure incurred. I have also to point out that the man who has got some training for salt manufacture is not put in charge of that work. The explanation given by the Excise Commissioner, that the officer had been in the salt factory for some time and therefore he felt it his duty to relieve him, does not appear satisfactory. The officer himself was not consulted and he has not expressed any unwillingness to be in charge of the work and go on doing scientific investigations in regard to salt manufacture. We also find from the Administration Report—the latest one a year or two old—that adequate attention is not being paid to prevent water from percolating into salt pans. We are told that the decrease in production is due to the fact that fresh water is percolating

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[Mr. K. P. Raman Pillai.]:

from the adjoining lake and the Public Works Department does not do the protective works, or that it did not complete the works for which money had been budgeted. For the decrease in the quantity we are also told that the weather is partly responsible and the curious portion of it is that on account of the fall due to the weather the Excise Commissioner wants an increase in the number of Inspectors.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I have to point out that nothing of that sort was said by me.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): I am sorry. (*Laughter.*) They came close upon one another. Then another circumstance is the fact that the price of salt is growing fabulously high, especially in up-country parts—Muvattupuzha, Todpuzha and other places. The price has gone fabulously high, to about Rs. 12 for a sack of two maunds, and no serious attempt seems to have been made to put down the price of salt in those places. At all events, Sir, the provision of an establishment under bankshalls would be a trifle when compared to the blessing that it would bring to the poor people, none of whom could live without salt.

Then, another circumstance I want to point out is the loss that is likely to be incurred on account of the monopoly of the contract given to Mr. Karayalar. Of course I shall be told by Mr. Van Ross in the course of his reply whether there is any difference between the rates at which he has to sell and if so what is the difference between the rates prevalent prior to the monopoly and subsequent to it. Even if the rates are the same, which I believe is not the case, the Government are to lose about Rs. 2 lakhs which they used to get under the heading, 'recoveries on account of transport charges'.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): May I ask the member to refer me to his authority for saying that there is a loss of Rs. 2½ lakhs?

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): Statistics and the Administration Report for 1096.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Not only in Alleppey but in all the depôts together.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): Yes, surely. The total sum it was that I mentioned and proportionate loss will have to be incurred at Alleppey. There is no harm in helping an individual. But at the same time it should not work at a very great loss to Government in these days of financial stringency. And then no serious attempt is being made to keep down the cost, I mean the establishment charges, at the factories and the salt business which the department is undertaking. On the other hand, we find from the discussion that the expenditure on account of establishment and other charges is steadily increasing. I believe my friends on this side of the House are not satisfied that any honest attempt is being made to keep down the expenditure under this

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head. I suppose these matters will receive the serious attention of the department and the Government.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): I wish to accord my support to Mr. Raman Pillai's motion. Formerly, salt was sold by Government officers in bankshalls. The depôts were spread throughout Travancore, but some twenty years back, if not earlier, that system was given up and consumers were at the mercy of the merchants and manufacturers. I would not have risen to speak on this point but for the fact that Mr. Van Ross, representing the Government in this department, has told us that the depôt in Trivandrum is being maintained to prevent any unconscionable profiteering by the merchants. Sir, I think the people of Trivandrum are in a very much better position than the people of Muvattupuzha, Todupuzha and other taluks where the number of merchants is limited and the capital is limited and private enterprise is not adequate to the demand. Rather than continuing the depôt in civilised Trivandrum for the purpose of keeping down profiteering, it will be very much more reasonable to afford relief to the subjects of His Highness the Maha Raja who have to live far away from this place and prevent the merchants from making undue profits. Therefore, Sir, I think it is absolutely necessary to reconsider the question of bankshalls. What we have given up once, we have to take up again; and once the mistake has been found out, the precipitate action which the Government took some years ago may be rectified at least now. For that reason I give my support to Mr. Raman Pillai's motion.

MR. PAUL V. DANIEL (*Agastisvaram*): I fully support the view taken by Mr. Velu Pillai and Mr. Raman Pillai in regard to bankshalls. When we were at Alwaye recently to attend a meeting of the Forest Committee, this grievance of the public was brought before us as well. That is that the merchants took great advantage of the situation and the poor people were thereby put to very great trouble and loss. Therefore I am also of opinion that the re-establishment of bankshalls will be of great use to the public.

MR. TARIATU KUNJITOMMAN (*Muvattupuzha*): ഉപ്പുവില്പന വിഷയത്തിൽ മൂവാറ്റുപുഴ, തൊടുപുഴ, കുന്നത്തുനാട് മുതലായ താലൂക്കുകളിൽ പല അഴിമതികളും നടക്കുന്നു. ജനങ്ങൾക്കു വളരെ കൂടുതൽ വിലകൊടുത്താൽ മാത്രമേ ഉപ്പു കിട്ടൂ എന്ന് ഇതുകൊണ്ടു വന്നിരിക്കുന്നു. സാധുക്കൾ വളരെ കഷ്ടപ്പെടുന്നു. പിറവം അസിസ്റ്റൻറ് എക്സൈസ് കമ്മീഷണരുടെ ടിക്കറ്റു വാങ്ങിക്കൊണ്ടു ചെല്ലുന്നവർക്കു മാത്രമേ മുനമ്പം ഉപ്പുപണ്ടകശാലയിൽ നിന്നും ഉപ്പു കൊടുക്കുകയുള്ളൂ എന്നും ചില കച്ചവടക്കാർക്കു മാത്രമേ ടിക്കറ്റു കൊടുക്കൂ എന്നും മറ്റുകച്ചവടക്കാർ അവരോടു കൂടുതൽ വിലയ്ക്കു വാങ്ങിക്കൊള്ളണമെന്നും വന്നിരിക്കുന്നതാണു് കുഴപ്പത്തിന്റെ കാരണം. ടിക്കറ്റൊപ്പാടുകൊണ്ടു് ഉപ്പിനു

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[Mr. K. C. Mammen Mappillai.]

ഇടങ്ങഴി ഒന്നിനു മൂവാറുപുഴ താലൂക്കിലെ മാക്കറിൽ ആറു ചക്രത്തോളം വിലയായിരിക്കുന്നു. ചില കച്ചവടക്കാക്കു അന്യായമായ ലാഭത്തിന് ഇടയാക്കീട്ടുണ്ടെങ്കിലും ഈ ഏർപ്പാടു സാധുക്കളെ വളരെ ബുദ്ധിമുട്ടിച്ചുകൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്നു.

Mr. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): ടിക്കറ് ഏർപ്പാടു നിർത്തിയിരിക്കുന്നു. ഇതു മെംബറോടു പറഞ്ഞിട്ടുണ്ട്.

Mr. TARIATU KUNJITOMMAN (*Muvattupuzha*): ശരിയാണ്, ഞാൻ ഇന്നലെ മിസ്റ്റർ വാൻറോസിനെ കണ്ട് ഉപ്പുവില്പനയുടെ കുഴപ്പങ്ങളെപ്പറ്റി സംസാരിച്ചപ്പോൾ ടിക്കറ് ഏർപ്പാടുനിർത്തി എന്നു അദ്ദേഹം എന്നോടു പറഞ്ഞു.

Mr. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): That ticket system existed only for a short period till the amendment to the Salt Rules was made. But it has now been abolished.

Mr. TARIATU KUNJITOMMAN (*Muvattupuzha*): എന്നാൽ ഞാൻ മൂവാറുപുഴ നിന്നും പുറപ്പെടുന്നതുവരെ സംഗതി ശരിപ്പെട്ടിട്ടില്ല. ഇപ്പോൾ ശരിപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കാം. മുമ്പു മൂവാറുപുഴ മുതലായ താലൂക്കുകളിൽ മനമ്പത്തുനിന്നും ഉപ്പുകൊണ്ടുവരുവാൻ പാടില്ലെന്നുണ്ടായിരുന്ന വ്യവസ്ഥയെ ഏതാനും മാസങ്ങൾക്കു മുമ്പു ഭേദപ്പെടുത്തി. നടപ്പിലിരുന്ന വ്യവസ്ഥയെ ഭേദപ്പെടുത്തിയതുകൊണ്ടു തല്ക്കാലം നേരിട്ട കുഴപ്പമാണിതെല്ലാം എന്നും കുറെക്കഴിയുമ്പോൾ കാര്യങ്ങൾ ശരിയാകുമെന്നും അദ്ദേഹം വിചാരിച്ചിരുന്നു. ഇപ്പോൾ പല മാസങ്ങൾ കഴിഞ്ഞുവെങ്കിലും നാൾക്കുനാൾ ഉപ്പിനു വില കൂടിയും ദുരാചാരം വർദ്ധിച്ചും കാണുന്നതുകൊണ്ട് ഈ കൌൺസിലിൽ പ്രസ്താവിക്കാമെന്നു വിചാരിച്ചതാണ്. ടിക്കറു സമ്പ്രദായം ഇപ്പോഴെങ്കിലും നിറുത്തിയത് അശ്വാസകരം തന്നെ.

The Rev. Fr. KURIAKOSE VETTIKKAPALLI (*Todupuha cum Kunnatnad*): It is a point on which I also wanted to say something. But since I have got the assurance of the Excise Commissioner, I do not want to say anything. The people were really suffering on account of the ticket system. But since Mr. Van Ross says that arrangements have been made to change it, I do not say anything.

Mr. K. C. MAMMEN MAPPILLAI (*Commerce and Industries, North*): The disbursement of salt from the Alleppey Bankshall has been causing a great deal of inconvenience. There are complicated and technical matters about the question. The fact remains that the merchants

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who go there to buy their salt are very greatly inconvenienced. Once there was something like a veritable sensation and I had to go to the Excise Commissioner. I think he fully agreed with me that there were real difficulties and said that he would be taking steps to prevent the inconvenience. I do not know how far he has succeeded. Afterwards I had no opportunity of looking into the matter.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*) : I want to know whether the member afterwards heard any complaints about the matter.

MR. K. C. MAMMEN MAPPILLAI (*Commerce and Industries*) : Afterwards I was not at Alleppey and therefore I had no opportunity. But what I want to emphasise is that unless great precaution is taken, especially where there is a monopoly contract, very serious injury to the poor consumers will follow. I have got with me a list those who go to the Alleppey bankshall to buy salt, have to pay. It was given to me by one whom I consider to be reliable. I would mention only one of them, namely, the Dharma Fund, *Mullakkal chirappu* &c., for which, a person who goes to the bankshall, has to pay three chackrams.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Will the member tell me to whom ?

MR. K. C. MAMMEN MAPPILLAI (*Commerce and Industries*): If the members do not want me to mention it, I shall keep quiet. The fact remains that my informant is a reliable person.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I want to know exactly who the person was that got it, as there are two agencies to sell salt now—the contractor and the Government.

MR. K. C. MAMMEN MAPPILLAI (*Commerce and Industries*): I only wish to say that this has become a regular tax upon the people.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): May I know who receives it ?

PRESIDENT: You are not bound to answer that question. You may decline to answer, Mr. Mammen Mappillai.

MR. K. C. MAMMEN MAPPILLAI (*Commerce and Industries*) : Whatever the agency may be, the money goes out of the pockets of the people.

MR. S. SUBRAHMANYA KARAYALAR (*Pattanapuram* cum *Shencottah*) : Will Mr. Mammen Mappillai tell me to whom this amount is paid ?

MR. K. C. MAMMEN MAPPILLAI (*Commerce and Industries North*): I do not want to say anything disparaging to Mr. Karayalar, specially as we are friends. He knows that I am the last person to say anything disparaging of him. But as I wrote to him, there is a far higher consideration than the claims of personal friendship ; it is the inconvenience caused to the public that induces me to say all this.

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[Mr. K. C. Mammen Mappillai.]

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*) : It leaves an unfair impression upon my officers. I would therefore request him to tell me the person who receives the money.

PRESIDENT : You can make your own inferences; you cannot force him to answer.

MR. V. SUBBA AIYAR (*Additional Head Sirkar Vakil*) : He may tell him privately.

MR. K.C. MAMMEN MAPPILLAI (*Commerce and Industries, North*) : I have got a list of ten or eleven imposts which every person who goes there is obliged to pay. I do not want to suggest that Mr. Karayalar's person takes the impost. Every person has to pay and who it is that receives is a broad surmise that Mr. Van Ross and I can make. But it is not possible to fix the responsibility of each person. I shall be very glad to show the list to Mr. Van Ross if he is not aware of the details. There is a very great oppression going on.

MR. S. KRISHNA AIYAR (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*) : In the public interests, will the member enlighten the other members of the Council ?

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): May I ask Mr. Mammen Mappillai to enlighten the Council ?

MR. K. C. MAMMEN MAPPILLAI (*Commerce and Industries, North*) : I am not in a position to say anything more than what I have already said on this point.

RAO BAHADUR K. A. KRISHNA AIYANGAR (*Nominated*) (*Deputy President*) May I ask Mr. Mammen Mappillai whether the local firm with which he is associated has to pay these imposts in its own case ?

MR. K. C. MAMMEN MAPPILLAI (*Commerce and Industries, North*) : I am afraid that firm may also have to pay.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*) : The difficulty is that Mr. Mammen Mappillai is not prepared to say who the person is that receives the payment. But the list seems to be interesting. If he is prepared to read it, it may be to the advantage of the House. We may scrutinise the list and we may also be benefited by the knowledge of the the so called kind of imposts (*Laughter.*)

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*) : I press for an answer particularly because we would like to know the nature of the imposts made and who the recipient is.

MR. JOHN MACKIE (*Planters*) : The member cannot make an aspersion on the staff of the Excise Commissioner. If the member cannot state facts, it is an out-and-out aspersion.

MR. K. C. MAMMEN MAPPILLAI (*Commerce and Industries, North*): I am sure I did not make any aspersion on the Excise Commissioner,

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I have been told by persons that there are certain inconveniences and that certain imposts have to be paid by people who want to buy salt. I may tell the Council that I am prepared to discuss the matter privately with any member. But I have to say that I did not make any statement which should be regarded as reflecting on the Excise Commissioner. I said these are facts and I ask the Excise Commissioner to look into the matter as far as it is feasible. I do not want to be lectured about what I should do and what I should not do. I know what I should do.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): May I know from Mr. Mammen Mappillai that in view of his statement that he does not cast any aspersion on the Abkari Department and in view of the fact that he does not wish to say anything against Mr. Karayalar, whether the particular imposts that he made mention of, on reliable authority as he told us,—

MR. K. C. MAMMEN MAPPILLAI (*Commerce and Industries, North*): I will give an example.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): I have not finished the question. He is not prepared to cast any aspersion either upon the Excise Department or upon the contractor. I ask then, on what basis does he make the statement that the illegal realisation of certain imposts is going on? It is that particular ground that one should like to understand before the Council is rendered any assistance in the matter of investigation.

MR. K. C. MAMMEN MAPPILLAI (*Commerce and Industries, North*): There are coolies, for example, who carry the bags from the bankshall to the boats. They might be demanding more than their fair share.

It is not an aspersion either upon the Excise Commissioner or Mr. Karayalar. There are different ways in which salt is sold and the people are made to pay more than what they should.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): I wish to ask another question. Mr. Mammen Mappillai seems to have read one item in the list *viz.*, *Muliakkal chirappu*. It is a Hindu *chirappu* and we know the particular class of people who will ask for that payment. That places us in a very delicate situation. It is therefore that I want to know what the other items are.

MR. K. C. MAMMEN MAPPILLAI (*Commerce and Industries, North*): I am not just now in a position to give them.

PRESIDENT: Will you please hurry up? Your time is almost over.

MR. K. C. MAMMEN MAPPILLAI (*Commerce and Industries, North*): I trust the Excise Commissioner will look into these matters and see that people are not put to any difficulties.

MR. M. K. KHADIR PILLAI: (*Nominated*): Sir, I am a merchant doing business at Alwaye. The merchants of Muvattupuzha,

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[Mr. M. K. Kadhir Pillai.]

Kunnatnad and Todupuzha are my constituents. I am dealing in almost all commodities except salt and a few other things. I know that merchants are selling salt at Rs. 10 and Rs. 12, whereas the actual cost is Rs. 7 according to the Government rules.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): Hear, hear.

MR. M. K. KHADIR PILLAI (*Nominated*): To get salt, the Excise authorities issue rules and select a few merchants who are the favourites of the Assistant Commissioners or others. I can give evidence that those who pay or do something to please the Assistant Commissioner, and others alone get salt.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): Hear, hear.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): May I know if the member had complained about this?

MR. M. K. KHADIR PILLAI (*Nominated*): Yes, I had before the Dewan, and before the Excise Commissioner.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I asked the member to give evidence, but he did not.

MR. M. K. KHADIR PILLAI (*Nominated*): But some others forged my name and sent a letter. The contents of the letter, however, are true; but the Commissioner did not send me the letter as desired by me.

PRESIDENT: The Excise Commissioner says that he wanted evidence and that you were not prepared to adduce evidence.

MR. M. K. KHADIR PILLAI (*Nominated*): I did not send any letter, but somebody sent a letter in my name. The contents of the letter were true and I was prepared to give evidence. Although I stated that I did not write that letter, I wrote to the Excise Commissioner that the contents were true. I know and I am sure that merchants are selling salt at Rs. 10.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): May I ask Mr. Khadir Pillai who are the Assistant Commissioners?

PRESIDENT: What is it please? I do not hear you.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): Mr. Khadir Pillai was telling us that the Assistant Commissioners are in the habit of receiving illegal gratification. That was in the plural. When I questioned their names, he mentioned the name only of Mr. Mammen.

PRESIDENT: He did not.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): Yes, he did. What I wish to know is that how he happened to use the plural.

MR. M. K. KHADIR PILLAI (*Nominated*): I know there are complaints from Changanachery and other places against the Assistant Commissioners.

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PRESIDENT: You mean about other Assistant Commissioners?

MR. M. K. KHADIR PILLAI (*Nominated*): Other Assistant Excise Commissioners. Mr. Mammen Mappillai told us that there is some *mamool* going on in the depôts. That also I can say is true, for in the Munambam Salt Depôt three pies are to be given to the depôt officers to get salt. Now, at this time, to get salt early, the merchants will have to pay more. Otherwise they will have to stay there for many days; the depôt officer will say: "It is not convenient to me; there are other people who will have to be sold salt to." and so on. So to get salt early, the merchants have to pay something to the officers. In our place, salt was sold at eight chackrams per *edangali*, the cost price of which is only three and a half chackrams. I have brought this matter to the notice of Government also, but I received no reply. The other day Mr. Van Ross told me that there was no complaint. I thanked him.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): Does the member think that the difficulty would be removed by establishing bankshalls?

MR. M. K. KHADIR PILLAI (*Nominated*): I am for reestablishing the old bankshall system.

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Neyyattinkkara*): The discussion on Mr. Raman Pillai's motion has disclosed very many important and interesting facts which should certainly engage the serious attention of the Excise Commissioner and the Government. I would refer to two matters. The first thing is about the defects consequent upon the monopoly system that is now prevailing in regard to the sale of salt. I should consider it to be better policy if Government had not given away the monopoly in respect of the transport and sale of salt to one and the same person. In that case, very probably these suspicions, at any rate, which have been so lucidly placed before the House, will not have arisen.

In the second place, I wish to know from the Excise Commissioner how it happened that a contract extending over four years has been given to Mr. Karayalar for the transport and sale of salt at Alleppey. I am really sorry that in this matter our position is rather delicate, inasmuch as we have to deal with a contractor who happens also to be a member of this House. It cannot be helped. Therefore I request the Excise Commissioner to place full facts before the House so that the contractor who is also a member of this House may be understood in the proper light by this House itself. I put a question regarding this matter at the last session of the Council and the answer given was that there was a breach of the previous contract entered into between the Government and the contractor owing to the fault of somebody, I believe on the part of the Government, and that the contractor threatened Government with notice to sue and that as a compensation this contract was given. I put a supplementary question on this subject but

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[Mr. A. Hoogewerf.]

the answer was that the official member wanted notice. Although the President was in a position to give the information, under the rules he was not able to give the answer. Now I trust that Mr. Van Ross will explain in detail all the circumstances connected therewith. Some time ago, when a similar contract for the transport and sale of salt was given to Mr. Motha, I had occasion to interpellate Government on the very undesirable effects that such contracts will have, especially when the contracts are given on private negotiation and not in an auction open to all. The price has been fixed also on private negotiation. With the increment in the duty of salt it may have been possible for the Government to forgo at least a large proportion of the item under recoveries which used to be taken into consideration in fixing the price of salt. It would appear from an answer given in this House some time ago that the duty on salt was Re. 1 as. 4 and the cost and transport charges came to 10 as. and the price was fixed at Re. 1 as. 14. The price of salt was fixed after making allowance for wastage and the cost of establishment shown under recoveries. Now when the duty has been doubled, it should have been possible for the Government to forgo a large proportion under the item recoveries which now come to swell the contract. But for that contract, it may have been possible for a generous Government to deal generously with the people and give them at least that amount of relief which may have been possible. There are serious defects in the monopoly contracts, apart from the vagaries consequent upon that system. I should therefore disapprove such contracts being entered into in future.

In regard to the accumulation of salt at Tamaracolam which were washed away in the cyclone of 1098, some explanation is due. Three lakhs of maunds of salt were washed away. I would like to know whether that has anything to do with the contract. In that case there was some preference shown to Mr. Karayalar because I find that there are very many factory owners also who were put to severe loss and whose loss has not been compensated. Under these circumstances, I hope Mr. Van Ross will explain, on behalf of the department and the Government, in satisfactory terms.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): Sir, I always held that during your administration you would make Travancore self-contained—

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): I rise to a point of order. I wish to know whether it is open to a member to speak personally of the Dewan's action.

PRESIDENT: I do not think it is proper.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): I withdraw my statement. During the last three or four years I thought steps would be taken to make Travancore selfcontained in regard to the supply of salt. But in the speech that I made an hour ago I made it clear that the manufacture of salt is far from satisfactory. I heard with great grief

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the Excise Commissioner singing over the grave of the salt factories in central Travancore. I wish that this question will be thoroughly enquired into, as salt factories in central Travancore mean transport charges almost *nil*. It will be a tremendous impetus to the industry. But I see that the matter is not being looked into. The salt factories are vanishing one after another. The excise system of manufacture and the sale of salt is by far the best system. But the second best system is the sale by the Government in depôts and bankshalls situated in convenient taluks wherefrom people could make their purchases. The abolition of this system is one of the greatest mistakes of the past administration. To add insult to injury and to jump from the frying pan into the fire, we see that the Government monopoly system has passed into the hands of a single individual. I heard Mr. Mammen Mappillai, one of the leading members of north Travancore, who seldom makes unnecessary complaints, speaking most bitterly of the method salt is being sold in the depôts. It is a tremendous impeachment. Mr. Khadir Pillai also supports Mr. Mammen Mappillai. These are very sad tales we had to hear this afternoon. I beg of you to thoroughly overhaul this department.

MR. K. C. MAMMEN MAPPILLAI (*Commerce and Industries, North*): A word of personal explanation. I never impeached anybody. It is rather too strong an expression.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): Impeachment of the system.

MR. K. C. MAMMEN MAPPILLAI (*Commerce and Industries*): I simply indicated certain irregularities, but you cannot characterise it as impeachment of a person or system.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): I beg of you to thoroughly overhaul the department.

PRESIDENT: You mean *the Government*?

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): Yes, Sir, the Government. Unfortunately the President and the Dewan are one here.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): May I know from Mr. Hoogewerf whether any impost was levied in the depôt during the time when he was acting Excise Commissioner or Assistant Commissioner?

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): Many attempts were made. But I was always like a hawk upon them.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): May I know how many men he punished for that?

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): There was no chance of punishing these people as no chance was given them to commit any fraud. (*Laughter*).

These are some of the remarks that I have to make on this motion.

The House adjourned for lunch at 2-27 P. M. and re-assembled at 3-15 P. M.

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[Mr. T. K. Velu Pillai.]

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): Sir, on behalf of my non-official friends, I may be permitted to submit a point of order for your kind consideration. The discussions on the motion under Demand II-Income-tax were cut short deliberately by us with the hope that the remaining time allotted for that Demand will also be made available for discussion of the motions under Excise. I may point out that the maximum time has been fixed under standing order No. 71 by which the President has the power to regulate the conduct of business in all matters not provided for by the regulation. So it is not a statutory limit and we beg that the remaining portion of the day be granted to us to discuss some of the important motions which are remaining under Excise.

PRESIDENT: I have no objection. It must be understood, however, that the total time taken for discussion on the motions should not exceed the statutory limit of seven days.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Some criticisms have been levelled against the administration of the salt factories in the State. In regard to the observations which Mr. K. P. Raman Pillai made regarding Mr. Nilakandan, I have to submit that it is very unfair to keep one officer in one place alone for a long time. From an administrative point of view as well as from the officer's point of view, it is very unfair to pin him down to one and the same place for an indefinite period.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): Is not the Devicolam Commissioner confined to that place ?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): That probably is a matter which could not be helped.

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Neyyattinkara*): Is it at his own request that the trained officer is kept away from Tamaracolam ? Has the Excise Commissioner ascertained the wishes of the officer concerned?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I have not felt the necessity for that. As a matter of fact, the transfer in question was made before I assumed charge of the department.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): Does Mr. Van Ross think there is any utility in the training of officers who are in charge of the *alloms*? Does he think such training indispensable or useless ?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): From the administrative point of view, a specially trained officer is useful.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): Will any special knowledge of salt manufacture be useful to the officers in charge of the *alloms*?

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MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): They have to follow some particular directions. The enforcement of those directions is considered sufficient for all practical purposes.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): So it does not mean that the aid of a special officer trained at the Government expenditure is useless?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): It is not indispensable.

MR. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): Is not a knowledge of chemistry useful for the manufacture of salt?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I said that it might be useful. I would be glad if the Council will give me more trained men. But a man could not be pinned down to a place. From an administrative point of view, it is undesirable. I have not many trained officers but only one. It is difficult therefore to make a choice.

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Neyyattinkara*): Are we to understand that the assistance of a special officer is absolutely of no use?

PRESIDENT: He has already answered that it is useful but that it is not indispensable.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): With regard to the complaint that the price of salt has been raised, I have to make one or two observations. The merchants sometimes unconscionably raise prices much to the detriment of the poor. That is being constantly watched by my officers and myself. They are bound to report to me the fluctuations in the price of salt in any locality. Any merchant selling salt at a higher rate will lose the privilege of getting salt from the depôts. If the price at any place rises very high, we rush in salt as a temporary measure and offer it at a low price.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): Have any such reports of officers been received by the Excise Commissioner?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Yes, from Alwaye. If there was any continued necessity, temporary bankshalls would have been opened, but there was no necessity.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): In Quilon I am told that the price of salt was increased owing to shortage of supply. Was it so?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I am not aware of that. There is a depôt at Quilon and there cannot be any shortage of salt. The people may also go to Alleppey for the salt.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): Why should not Bombay salt be imported to Quilon Depôt?

PRESIDENT: That question does not arise.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Whatever action is necessary to keep down the price of salt is being taken. The question

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[Mr. A. J. Van Ross.]

of introducing bankshalls was condemned many years ago because the bankshalls were run by low-laid petty officers who took the place of the present—day traders about whom Mr. T. K. Velu Pillai and others complained and said that they are up to all kinds of corruption. That was why the old bankshalls were abolished. I have, however, no objection to enquire into the matter and reconsider the question with a view to open bankshalls in places where people are suffering from want of salt. With regard to the petty exactions imposed at the Alleppey Port Salt Depôt to which Mr. Mammen Mappillai made reference, I am sorry he did not bring the matter to my notice. When I was at Alleppey some time back in connection with Mr. Karayalar's contract, Mr. Mammen Mappillai did not inform me of it though we were talking together for over an hour. Had I known all this then, he would have given me an opportunity to conduct an investigation and put a stop to all these corruptions. I am ever anxious to put down malpractices.

Mr. K. C. MAMMEN MAPPILLAI (*Commerce and Industries, North*): I heard about this only afterwards.

Mr. A. J. VAN ROSS *Excise(Commissioner)*: When respectable persons come and tell me but do not produce evidence, how is it possible to punish my subordinates? If people do not come and give evidence regarding their complaint, what can I do? If Mr. Khadir Pillai had offered to give evidence, I would have run up to Alwaye and made an enquiry, but no such assurance was forthcoming. Under such circumstances, how can I punish a subordinate? That is the difficulty I experience.

Mr. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): Should an officer of the Excise Commissioner's position desist from making a legal enquiry, simply because a respectable man wants an enquiry to be made, but does not produce evidence?

Mr. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): An enquiry could be made. But people must give evidence.

Mr. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): Did respectable men like Mr. Khadir Pillai tell Mr. Van Ross that in case an enquiry was made they would not speak the truth?

Mr. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): More than one respectable man has said he would not say anything. He refused to give a statement. I am very anxious to check the abuses. If Mr. Khadir Pillai is prepared to give a statement, I am ready to make the necessary enquiry.

Mr. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): Is not the complaint given by respectable persons sufficient?

Mr. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): It is insufficient to punish a man departmentally. I have to convince another officer of the guilt of the man and about the accuracy of the facts connected with that

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evidence. Without that, it is hopeless. Wherever possible, I should like to put down this corruption.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): May I know whether, in view of the definite statements given by Mr. Khadir Pillai, the Commissioner is prepared to take definite action and proceed with further enquiry?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I would like the member to tell me how the enquiry should proceed. If he keeps aloof and would not give me any indication of the officer's guilt, am I to go on a roving commission enquiring about the officer's conduct? I may assure him that no favoritism will be shown. I will try my best to find out the truth from the evidence. I wish Mr. Khadir Pillai will help me in this matter.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): So, if Mr. Khadir Pillai is not prepared to give any assistance, you are not prepared to make an enquiry?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*); I will make private enquiry and see if there is any evidence. I wish that Mr. Khadir Pillai would give evidence.

Then in regard to Mr. Karayalar's contract, some reference has been made. I shall inform the House of the circumstances under which Mr. Karayalar's contract came to be entered into. In 1095, during the time of my predecessor, Mr. Karayalar made an offer to transport and sell salt at Alleppey. Mr. Raman Pillai thought that the opportunity should not be lost by Government because in his view it was desirable that the Government should retire from the direct sale of salt and leave such sale to the people themselves. He wanted to make a trial and see whether such experiment would succeed beneficially to the people.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): May I know whether giving the contract to a single individual would not frustrate the very object of the Government?

PRESIDENT: He is explaining how it came into existence.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): The idea underlying is that the sale of salt should not be the ordinary function of Government. It is only respectable people that could be entrusted with that function. Salt is essential to the life of every man. Government or the department should have some guarantee that the salt will be brought and sold. We should not give the contract to a man on whom no reliance could be placed. During Mr. Krishnan Nair's time, not only Mr. Karayalar's offer came but several other applications also came in. Mr. Krishnan Nair decided that the contract should be given to Mr. Karayalar. That was in 1095. In 1096 there was no salt.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum cum Nedumangad*): I wish to know whether it was Mr. Krishnan Nair that decided or the Government.

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[Mr. A. Hoogewerf.]

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): It was the Government that decided.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): Was any intimation of the decision sent to Mr. Karayalar?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Yes.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): Was there an advertisement published in the Gazette?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): It was not done in 1096, as we were not able to give salt from the factory.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): Was there a contract in a legal sense?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I am coming to that. In 1097 there was some salt. We wanted to reserve some salt and to send some salt to the Trivandrum Depôt; when that was done, there was no salt for transport to Alleppey.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): Was notice of suit sent by Mr. Karayalar?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Yes. The law officers were then consulted. They said that the contract sanctioned by Government to Mr. Karayalar was a binding contract and that he had cause of action against Government for not giving salt to him. Government therefore negotiated with him and in consideration of his claim for damages entered into a contract for a term of four years.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): What was the amount of damages he demanded?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): About Rs. 75,000. That was his claim.

PRESIDENT: For a year.

MR. M. N. PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): Who were the law officers?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I am not in possession of that information.

PRESIDENT: The law officers are a body well known to the public.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): The cyclone came on at the end and washed away the salt left in the factory for transport.

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Neyyattinkara*): May I know for how many months the salt was reserved, the quantity manufactured up to the end of Medam 1096 and whether the Government themselves carried on the business?

PRESIDENT: That does not arise here.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): How many months after did the cyclone come?

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MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): The manufacture goes on up to Medam.

MR. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): For how many months does the manufacture go on and from what time?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): It is *Thye* to *Kani*.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): How many months after that did the cyclone come?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): It came in Vrischikam just before the shipping season.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): How long was the salt on the ridges before it was removed?

PRESIDENT: He cannot tell you definitely because the process goes on continuously.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Since we could not give him a contract at Tamaracolam, we had to give him the contract for Tuticorin salt instead. We took the opportunity of getting better terms with him in fixing the terms of the contract. That is how the contract came to be given to Mr. Karayalar. Of course in making an experiment of this nature, some loss under recoveries is inevitable, and the Government have to bear it.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): Is any rent charged for the salt bankshall at Alleppey? Do Government realise any rent from the contractor?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Instead of rent, we make him do all the maintenance work.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): Is there any difference between Mr. Karayalar's sale price at Alleppey and the Government rate?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): No.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): Has the loss of salt by cyclone anything to do with the giving of the contract to Mr. Karayalar?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): In making the second agreement, we demanded and obtained from Mr. Karayalar the recovery of transport charge of 1½ annas for a maund of salt that is sold as against six pies which was the commission which was fixed before.

Mr. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): What is the transport charge?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I am not aware. Mr. Karayalar must be able to give the information. I know the Government rate by sea to Alleppey. It is 6 to 7 annas per maund.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): Including the price of salt?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): No.

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[Mr. M. R. Madhava Variar.]

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): I want to know the price of salt and the cost of transport charge.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): The price of salt at the factory --

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): If it is home salt?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): The price of home salt will be two to three annas per maund.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): The price of salt including transport charges?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I do not know what transport charges Mr. Karayalar may have to pay. Then there is a good deal of wastage. The contractor has to pay for every maund not delivered at Rs. 2½. There are the establishment charges and several other items of expenditure for him. When we had an opportunity, we got the best terms from him. I hope that I have told this House that, in the administration of this department, Government are taking every measure to safeguard the interests of the people, and as for the officers concerned, I shall see, with the help of those who will give me information and also by private enquiry, what can be done in the matter.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): The monopoly of supply and sale of salt is with the Government and the Government have to use that monopoly for the good of the people and the people should be provided with good salt. But the policy pursued by the Government is to force the people to use salt which is not liked by them. In Quilon we do not get Bombay salt or local salt, and the salt supplied to the people is very bad. In reply to an interpellation which I asked in the last meeting of the Council, it was stated that Tinnevelly salt is less injurious than Bombay salt. But whatever may be the opinion of the experts and whatever may be the opinion of the Excise Commissioner, people do not think that Tinnevelly salt is better than Bombay salt. Even the Government officers in inviting tenders for contract prefer Bombay to Tinnevelly salt, and the ticket system in north Travancore is an example to show that the Bombay salt is liked by the people and not the Tinnevelly salt. Moreover, the salt which we are getting in Quilon, I do not think, tallies with the sample furnished by the contractor. Tinnevelly salt itself is very bad and the salt brought to Quilon is worse still. We are forced to eat that salt because we cannot purchase Bombay salt from Quilon, and one has to go to Alleppey to purchase Bombay salt. In Alleppey itself Bombay salt is sold along with Tinnevelly salt. If I want to purchase a sack of Bombay salt, I shall have purchase two sacks of Tinnevelly salt also which I do not want. When the contract for the supply of salt was given to Mr. Karayalar, the whole

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quantity of Tinnevelly salt was with him, and this monopoly is liable to be abused, because Mr. Karayalar—I do not know whether he will do it; he can do it—can take two sacks of Tinnevelly salt and one sack of Bombay salt because it would be in his possession in large quantity and he can dictate terms to the merchants with regard to price and cause trouble to the people. I do not say he does so or he will do that, but there is the possibility. What I say is that the method of disbursement is anything but satisfactory.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): About Mr. Karayalar's cornering Bombay salt—

PRESIDENT: You may say that in your reply.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): Five or six years ago, we were getting Bombay salt alone. I do not know why Tinnevelly salt was purchased by Government. Local salt is much better than Tinnevelly salt. We can disburse local salt to the various places in Travancore, but the Government would not do it.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): It has been already explained why Tinnevelly salt has been sent to Quilon. Because there was not enough local salt.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Ptlanamtitta*): We are not getting local salt or Bombay salt; but we are forced to eat Tinnevelly salt which is very bad and which does not tally with the sample. I put a question to Mr. Van Ross whether there is any scarcity of salt. He is not aware of it. But I am aware of it. Some merchants are trying to increase the price of the Tinnevelly salt which is supplied to the Quilon Depôt by Mr. Karayalar. Though we get bad salt, we do not find that the price is reduced. I have to bring these facts to the attention of Government.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): I propose that the question be now put.

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Neyyattinkara*): I second the motion.

PRESIDENT: Is the House for a closure?

The closure motion was carried.

MR. K. P RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): I do not wish to take up the time of the Council in speaking about the various suggestions that have been thrown out. However, I must congratulate my friends for the fearless manner in which they have used their freedom of speech. My friend Mr. Khadir Pillai who has told the House that he has definite information that three pies were levied in excess by the Asssistant Commissioner

MR. M. K. KHADIR PILLAI (*Nominated*): Not by the Assistant Commissioner, but by the authorities of the salt depot.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): I think he mentioned the officer's name. The shorthand reporter's report will show what he said. (*Laughter.*)

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[Mr. V. Kunjukrishna Pillai]

MR. M. K. KHADIR PILLAI (*Nominated*): About the Assistant Commissioners, the merchants say they have to pay Re. 1 and depôt officer three pies (*Laughter.*)

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): I thank you for the correction. Consistent with the higher pay he receives, he gets a higher sum; but the depôt officer gets three pies. Mr. Mammen Mappillai who has got business connection at Alleppey, who deals with salt, has told the House that he has got reliable information that as many as eleven imposts are levied These are matters which should receive serious considerations at the hand. of the Government and the Commissioner, who, I hope will take prompt action to put down such corruption because, salt, I need hardly say, is required by the poorest of the poor, and in the fair name of good administration any malpractices in the sale of salt, in the quality or quantity of salt that is sold should be put a stop to with a very stern hand. With these words, I withdraw the motion.

The motion was by leave withdrawn.

Motions 57 to 65.

The following motions were not moved:

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI.

57. To reduce the allotment of Rs 59,800 for salt business by Rs. 100.

MR. N. RAMAKRISHNA PILLAI.

58. To reduce the total allotment of Rs. 1,07,975 for salt by Rs. 100.

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI.

59. To reduce the total allotment of Rs. 1,07,975 for salt by Rs. 100.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR.

60. To reduce the total allotment of Rs. 1,07,975 for salt by Rs. 100.

MR. N. RAMAKRISHNA PILLAI.

61. To omit the allotment of Rs. 144 for personal allowance.

MR. V. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI.

62. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 2,000 for travelling allowance of officers by Rs. 500.

MR. V. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI.

63. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 600 for travelling allowance of establishment by Rs. 200.

MR. T. KUMARA PILLAI.

64. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 500 for law charges by Rs. 200.

MR. T. KUMARA PILLAI.

65. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 1,500 for purchase of instruments by Rs. 1,000.

Motion 66

MR. V. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil*): Sir, I beg to make the following motion:

66. *To reduce the allotment of Rs. 13,000 for equipment and clothing by Rs. 3,000.*

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Under this item, the Excise Commissioner demanded last year a bigger amount than was necessary. This could be seen from the admission made by the Commissioner last year. He then unhesitatingly consented to a cut.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I would say I accepted the cut not because I demanded an unnecessarily large sum, but because I intended to try and make other arrangements if possible.

MR. V. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI (*Chiryinkil*): What I said was that he unhesitatingly consented to have the cut without any objection whatever. Now, again, the Commissioner comes forward asking for a bigger sum than that demanded last year. The last year's budget would show that the amount allotted was Rs. 12,000. Now he wants Rs. 1,000 more. I am at a loss to know why an increased amount is needed. We all know that the prices have gone down now. In this view, the Commissioner can very well accept a cut of Rs. 3,000 now.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): In view of the general desire of the House that every possible retrenchment should be made, I readily accepted the cut last year. Instead of issuing two suits to each, as was usual in previous years, I issued to each officer only one suit, and then decided that I should make an experiment of issuing two suits only in alternative years. Hitherto we were getting back the old suits and auctioning them. This practice has now been stopped. The men will thus be able to use two old suits along with the new one.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): Full trousers or shorts?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): As usual they were supplied with knickers. No full trousers.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): No shorts?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): No.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): Could not a saving be made by the supply of shorts?

PRESIDENT: He is issuing shorts. That is what he says, I think.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Shorts are somewhat different from knickers. The difference is very little, but the knickers would look much neater.

MR. N. PADMANABHA PILLAI (*Karunagapalli*): May I know what was the actual expenditure during the current year?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I shall tell you. I have not got the actual figures; for, this year we have not made all the payments. But it will come to about Rs. 12,000. I have been cutting my coat according to my cloth. I am introducing all possible changes in deference to the wishes of the members in order to effect all possible retrenchment next year. I have to supply two suits; otherwise the men will look ragged. For two suits for 1,500 men, 3,000 suits will

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[Mr. K. P. Raman Pillai.]

be required. I believe Rs. 10,000 will be required for that purpose. I will just read out to you the exact figures. In 1098, *i.e.*, the current year, only one suit was supplied to each officer. In 1099 two suits have to be supplied. In 1100, one suit has to be supplied. The stock available in 1099 is 2,870. Hence after distributing two suits for 1,500 subordinates, no balance will be left in 1099. In 1099, the usual purchase will be made for the next year. So, 1,500 suits have to be stocked in 1099 for supply in 1100. At the rate of Rs. 4 as. 8 for 1,500 men, the amount will come to Rs. 6,750. I have to buy Turkey red for turban and then water-proof capes which have been supplied only to half the number of men. This will cost Rs. 5,000. Then gold lace etc, have to be bought. Altogether the estimate comes to Rs. 14,624. I shall have to manage with Rs. 13,000.

The motion was by leave withdrawn.

Motions 67 to 71.

The following motions were not moved :—

MR. V. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI :

67. To omit the allotment of Rs. 72 for hot weather charges.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI :

68. To omit the allotment of Rs. 72 for hot weather charges.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR :

69. To omit the allotment of Rs. 72 for hot weather charges.

MR. V. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI :

70. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 700 for office expenses and miscellaneous by Rs. 200.

MR. A GOVINDA MENON :

71. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 20, 742 for supplies, services and contingencies by Rs. 1,000.

Motion 72.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*) : Sir, I beg to move the following motion :

72. *To reduce the allotment of Rs. 41,340 for Commissioner by Rs. 100.*

In doing so, I wish to draw the attention of the House to certain drawbacks in the administration of the department. We have been noticing that the revenue under certain heads in this department is steadily going down; and in the Administration Report of the department, we find certain reasons therefor are alleged from year to year without due attention being paid to the statistics supplied by the very same department. In 1097, for example, the amount realised under Abkari, Opium and Ganja was less than in the previous year by Rs. 3,85,972. This fall in revenue was attributed by the Excise Commissioner to the reduction in the issue strength of arrack which diverted some of the arrack drinkers to toddy, the smaller purchasing power

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of the people, the stringency of the money market, the higher price of liquor and the anti-drink propaganda. I shall presently show to the House that all these reasons advanced by the Excise Commissioner are unacceptable and that the real reason is to be sought and found elsewhere. For example, the first reason assigned is that, owing to the reduction of strength of arrack, people began to drink toddy. I submit it is common knowledge that, however weakened, the strength of the arrack will never be less than that of toddy. And a person who is accustomed to drink arrack would never resort to toddy. It is also pertinent to point out that the quantity of toddy available for consumption in 1097 was less than that in 1096, the number of trees tapped for toddy in 1097 having fallen from 72,965 in 1096 to 72,851. The allegation that the arrack drinkers resorted to toddy drinking cannot hold good because sufficient quantity of toddy was not available for that purpose.

The second reason that he advanced is the smaller purchasing power of the people. This, again, as I have attempted to show at the general discussion of the budget, is wrong. If the purchasing power of the people is to be judged from the value of imports, we find that in 1097 the value of imports was Rs. 4,93,75,571 against Rs. 4,76,71,391 in the previous year. Judged by this, we find that the purchasing power of the people was, if anything, greater.

The third reason advanced by the Commissioner is the higher cost of liquor. The years 1096 and 1097 come under the same biennial period of contract. How and why in the second year of the contract the price came to be higher and whether it is advantageous to the contractor to raise the price of arrack in the second year are matters which require explanation before these arguments could be accepted. We have also in that connection to remember that in 1097 the import of foreign liquor fell by 32 per cent.; the consumption of arrack fell by 25 per cent. and the toddy available was less by 11 per cent. so that the total reduction is considerable.

My submission to the Council is whether it is wrong to infer that this fall of 68 per cent. was made up by illicit practice. At page 7 of his report, the Commissioner gently hints about the recrudescence in illicit distillation. He states:

> The fall in the consumption of arrack was not confined to any particular tract or district but it was common to all the State. There was a general fall in the consumption of the intoxicants which contribute to the abkari revenue. The consumption of toddy, foreign liquor, opium and ganja also fell considerably. The main causes which led to the heavy fall in consumption are detailed below:—
>
> (1) The reduction in the issue strength of arrack.
>
> (2) The great trade depression and tightness of the money market which considerably reduced the purchasing power of the people
>
> (3) The anti-drink campaign.
>
> The reduction in the issue strength of arrack caused much dissatisfaction and there was in consequence considerable recrudescence of illicit distillation especially in the Nagercoil, Trivandrum and Quilon Circles,

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[Mr. M. R. Madhava Variar]

I wonder what the Commissioner has to tell us of the increased activities of his army of Sub-Inspectors whom he insisted upon retaining last year, in the direction of detecting illicit practices. Looking at the statistics of excise cases, we find that the cases under the Abkari law detected in 1096 was 1071, while in 1097 it fell to 921, and it is also noteworthy that of the cases charged before the magistrates we find one in twenty-two ended in acquittal, while in 1097 one in twelve ended in acquittal. This shows that illicit distillation is on the increase and that the department is not able to get on with the work. I believe this is partly due to the system of Sub-Inspectors that has been introduced.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Sub-Inspectors have been introduced only from Tulam 1098.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): Sir, in supporting Mr. Raman Pillai's motion, I have to advert to the temperance policy pursued by the department. This year an assurance was given in this Council that the department will be worked towards temperance; and in reply to a question which I put in this Council, it was answered that Mr. Van Ross is being asked to submit a scheme by the end of this year. But, by the policy pursued by the department after this assurance, one is led to believe that the department is not deviating from the old policy which it was pursuing to make revenue.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Will the member support his statement by facts?

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): I shall substantiate these statements. In the last Council, Sir, I said that the rules framed by the Government for the administration of this department were honored more in their breach. And even after the assurance given last time, these rules are very often violated. As an example, I shall say that there is a rule that shops should not be kept open after 8 P. M. But, generally in Trivandrum itself, yesterday and day before yesterday, I found shops open after 8 P. M. and there was a case at Paravur which was the subject of an interpellation that a toddy shop was opened after 8 P. M. and was kept open till morning. This was done after the assurance given to this Council and with the knowledge of the Excise subordinates that it is a crime and an infringement of the rule; but the answer which I got to my interpellation was that the Excise Commissioner had '*noticed*' the conduct of the Excise Inspector. At Trivandrum there are several shops which are kept open in the night, and if Mr. Van Ross will go with me one night I shall show him several shops which are thus kept open. Another thing is that there is an old circular to the effect that shops should not be located near temples, markets and other public places and thoroughfares. Now 876 shops are located in such objectionable localities. The department is not working towards temperance. I do not blame Mr. Van Ross or

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anybody. I blame the system obtaining in the department. Another thing is—

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): May I know from the member whether he considers the closing of the shops during day time or during night is more objectionable from the standpoint of the public?

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): I think if shops are kept open till late at night, generally the laborers, after work, will go to the shop and get drunk. So the drink evil will increase and besides give rise to theft and other crimes. Stolen articles are taken to the shops and sold in exchange for drink. The rule regarding early closing of liquor shops obtains not only in Travancore but in other civilised countries also. The revenue of the department has increased though it was not expected. The Dewan in his address at the last session of the Assembly said that if the fall was due to temperance movement he would be very glad. There are various causes and one of the most important causes for the increase of the revenue is the terrorism created by the free application of section 90 of the Criminal Procedure Code during a short period of this year.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): Does Mr. Madhava Variar know whether in England liquor shops are allowed to continue late at night till 1 or 2 o'clock?

MR. JOHN MACKIE (*Planters*): No.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): I ask this question on information given to me by a friend of mine who has gone to England and France. Is there any rule laid down re. closing of liquor shops in London?

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): Sir, I am sorry that I do not know anything about the conditions in England. At the same time I do not think it good for us to imitate those people.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): Personally I am not of opinion that shops should be kept open till late at night. I asked the question to elicit information.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): I was referring to the attitude of Government and the department towards temperance. I understand that one Singa Rayan was deputed to Cape Comorin with directions in the order to stem the tide of temperance there. I do not know whether my information is correct; but I make the allegation in the hope that I shall be corrected by the Excise Commissioner, if I am wrong. I understand also that a temperance meeting was dispersed by Mr. Satyavagisvara Aiyar at Agastisvaram. When Dr. M. N. Pillai interpellated Government said that they would enquire. Another matter is the new facility for regarding this matter the Government drink offered by the opening of 13 shops where flavoured toddy arrack could be had. I understand that the greatest Excise authorities are against the use of flavoured toddy

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[Mr. A. Hoogewerf.]

arrack. Mr. Thomas, an Excise Inspector, detected a case of transport of illicit liquor and successfully prosecuted the offender. But the excise authorities have asked his explanation for doing so. I have also interpellated Government about Mr. Rama Aiyangar of Ambalapuzha who prohibited shop-keepers from selling toddy and arrack in unlicensed areas. These shop-keepers generally take the liquor to the labourers working in the *punja* lands during harvest time. I think the excise authorities chastised Mr. Rama Aiyangar instead of appreciating his work.

PRESIDENT: There is, I believe, an interpellation on this subject which has not been answered by Government.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): I make these allegations subject to correction. Then there is even now in Arukutty what is called the *Kathipanam* (കത്തിപ്പണം) scandal, under which each toddy drawer is forced to pay a certain amount to the excise officers there. This is an old grievance and even now I am told it prevails in Arukutty where every house is a shop. In 1098 Chingam, the shop-keepers at Alleppey had not paid one-tenth of the security within the period prescribed, but they were all the same allowed to sell liquor in violation of of the Abkari Rules. Toddy and arrack were brought for sale from the vend areas of Vaikam and Shertallai to Alleppey in violation of abkari law. I think that these will show that the rules are not enforced. If the rules made by Government are strictly enforced, there will be prohibition in this country. There need not be the fear that revenue will be diminished.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): No subject is engaging public attention so much on the platform and in the press and in this Council itself besides the Popular Assembly as the Excise administration. There are, I believe about 85 questions in this Council about the excise administration. I may at once say that there is no personal equation in this matter. I must thank my friend Mr. K. P. Raman Pillai for bringing up the general principle of excise administration before this House to-day. It has been proved to the whole House that the excuse brought forward by Mr. Van Ross about the fall in the consumption of arrack is absolutely untenable. It cannot hold water for a single minute. Few people given to drinking arrack, however weak the arrack might be, will resort to toddy. Very few people except the labering classes take toddy, especially in this cold weather, as it is generally believed that it may cause rheumatism.

Now, Sir, I should like to refer to the address of the Dewan of Travancore to the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly. I heard with grief the very great trouble in Cape Comorin referred to by my friend Mr. Madhava Variar. I got a registered letter from a parish priest there discribing the whole story. He said that the whole of Cape Comorin and the surrounding villages had become entirely temperate with the exception of a very few people. The people there were enjoying perfect peace and

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happiness. Suddenly a thunderbolt came. I believe a Sub-Inspector was sent there, and it is stated in the registered letter that a good deal of confusion was created. This is a very sad story indeed. It was not upon any compulsion or under the influence of any law that the people became temperate. The people did so voluntarily. I think, if anybody has disturbed the peace there, it is a very great sin that has been committed. I hear complaints from all sides about the malpractices going on, especially in north Travancore. I had interpellated the Government but I have not been replied why the independent shop system has not been introduced in north Travancore and why shops have not been auctioned in certain places and they have been given to Mr. Nadar. The excuse was that the tree-tax in the adjoining Cochin territory was low and when the tree-tax in Cochin was raised to the same amount as the tree-tax on the Travancore frontier, the independent shop system would be introduced. We shall probably have to wait till the crack of doom, when that is done. In the memorandum of the late Mr. Brown regarding the tree-tax, he says that the tree-tax, should be low and rentals high. To make a long story short, when that is done, the price of toddy—

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I wish to know whether he proposes that the tree-tax should be reduced.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): Certainly not. The price of toddy should be equal on both sides. Whether you do this or that, it is immaterial to me. But the excuses brought forward by Mr. Van Ross cannot hold water for a single second.

PRESIDENT: May I draw your attention to the time?

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): This is a very important matter. Everywhere I hear of malpractices.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Mr. Hoogewerf had been for several years an Assistant Excise Commissioner. I wish to know whether he has succeeded in putting down malpractices entirely.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): I was working day and night and have detected more grave offences than all the Range Inspectors of the State put together in certain years.

PRESIDENT: That is not the question. The question is whether you have succeeded, when you were Assistant Excise Commissioner, in putting down malpractices completely.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): I have done my very best to do so and my Inspectors co-operated with me.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): That is the case with other officers also. Their subordinates also co-operate with them and they are also earnest.

MR. W. H. PITT (*Commissioner of Police*): May I ask one question? I wish to know whether, if the arrack drinker could not be persuaded to drink toddy, it is worth while to take all this trouble in dissuading him from drinking. (*Laughter.*)

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[Mr. N. Ramakrishna Pillai.]

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*) : I would earnestly appeal to the House to bestow very serious consideration on this matter and do what can be done in the holy cause of temperance.

MR. N. RAMAKRISHNA PILLAI (*Vaikam cum Ettumannur*) : I also wish to make a few remarks with respect to the excise policy, particularly in the Arukutty Circle which happens to be within my constituency. The independent shop system was introduced through out the State before 1089 except in the Arukutty circle where in 1090 the independent shop system in respect of jaggery arrack was introduced, but the rend system in respect of toddy was allowed to continue. The practice of levying a fixed amount from every tapper, known as *kathipanam* (കത്തിപ്പണം) also came into existence about 1090. Government have admitted in their reply to an interpellation sent by me that this system of levying *kathipanam* (കത്തിപ്പണം) was prevalent in the Arukutty Circle. I shall repeat my question and quote the answer I received.

"Q. - (*a*) Will the Government be pleased to state whether they have received any report from the late Excise Commissioner Mr. N. Raman Pillai, stating that the Excise Officers in the Arukutty Circle were receiving a monthly subscription of Re. 1 - 8 from every tapper in the Circle in return for a free license to sell toddy and make toddy arrack in his house, that to avoid the independent jaggery arrack shop-keepers' complaints they were forcing every tapper to buy a bottle of arrack from the arrack shop-keepers and that this system of issuing a bottle of arrack to a tapper was something like issuing free licenses to conduct malpractices ?

(*b*) Who were the officers thus reported against ?

(*c*) Have Government censured them for their malpractices ?

A. (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) Mr. T. V. Ramakrishna Aiyar and some of the Inspectors working under him.

(*c*) Mr. Ramakrishna Aiyar was censured."

There are about 2,000 tappers in the Arukutty Circle and therefore the amount realised is considerable. Either because the punishment was very light or because the inducement offered is more powerful than the fear of punishment this practice continued, so much so that once in 1095, the District Superintendent of Police, Mr. Padmanabhan Tampi, made a report to Government that a good deal of corruption prevailed there in respect of the excise revenue. I understand that the present Police Commissioner also has made a report to Government—I speak in gam subject to correction—that the Arukutty tappers' strike was not due to any social movement but was entirely the outcome of the oppression by the local excise officers. In view of the fact that these questions have been prominently brought to the attention of the Government, I wish to know whether an impartial enquiry has been made in respect of the numerous complaints in regard to this excise division. It is high time that an impartial enquiry was made in respect of the complaints constantly made about the corruption that is prevailing in the Arukutty Circle. The attention of Government might have also been directed to this aspect of the question by the Assembly

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member who represented Vaikam at the eighteenth session of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly and spoke about the corruption of the Excise Department. These are serious allegations which ought to receive careful consideration from Government.

I understand that, in the Arukutty Circle, shops are conducted mainly in private houses. Sales are not generally conducted in independent shops. Every tapper's house is a shop and sale of toddy is conducted almost wholly in private houses. The independent shop system has to be introduced in this circle as soon as possible as the present practice of giving the contract to a single individual without auctioning is highly objectionable both on account of the loss to Government and the malpractices it gives rise to. I would request Government to take these facts also into consideration when dealing with the excise policy.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): Sir, I am very desirous of making a few observations on the important subject now before the House. Mr. K. P. Raman Pillai has in a very able manner discussed the financial aspect, while Messrs. Hoogewerf and Madhava Variar dwelt more on the temperance movement in connection with the department.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): Mr. Velu Pillai should not think that I am opposed to temperance.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): I never thought so. I advisedly made the observations, because, when a member deals with the financial aspect of the question, the temperance movement will be against that. The Government have from time immemorial given the public to understand that they are not anxious to push up the sale of arrack. I was an Excise Inspector at Ettumanur at a time when Kumaranalloor *utsavam* was in full swing. I did want to obey the orders of Government. I did not want to send a consignment of excise constables with a good deal of arrack to be sold illegally in order to obtain revenue. But at about 10 o'clock at night when I was vigorously patrolling about, fearing illicit practices, I found a large building in which arrack was sold—Government arrack—by a Government abkari contractor of the Kottayam range. I wanted to charge him for the offence I applied to my official superior for permission to take up the case. The Circle Officer said that he had given permission to the Kottayam contractor to take arrack outside his jurisdiction and sell it there, and said that whether it was sold at Ettumanur or Kumaranalloor the revenue would go to the State. I have nothing more to add to that. I wish that what Government expect is done by the Government officers.

Regarding the financial aspect, Sir, I have to say that it is very painful that the Travancore Government, although they allow these practices, are not able to get the benefit of the full income. Last time when the resolution about the temperance movement was being discussed, I said that the sins belong to the system rather than to the men. In the same manner with regard to the revenue, the sins are not

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[Mr. T. K. Velu Pillai.]

of Mr. Van Ross, but have been gathered for a very long time. The Excise Commissioner, Sir, is an officer who is responsible to Government for about Rs. 90 lakhs. He has very little leisure. He is a hard-worked officer and when the temperance movement is in full swing throughout the State, he has got very anxious moments indeed. Now you will find, Sir, that the Travancore State is divided into eleven Excise circles. These circles are presided over by officers who are not of very great standing in service, junior officers on Rs. 175, called by the glorious name of Assistant Commissioners. I remember a time when the Assistant Commissioner was looked upon as a great officer. The senior Tahsildar used to consider it a great thing if he is promoted to the place of an Assistant Commissioner. It was a surprise to all why the system was changed. Co-ordination of eleven circles in Trivandrum is a very difficult matter. But if we revert to that old order by which we had as three Assistant Commissioners men of status, of high pay, seniors in service, who are able to control the operations of the subordinates, I think we shall be able to get much better revenue than we get now. Further at that time there was no hard and fast rule that the senior Inspector should become the Assistant Commissioner. But to-day all those who serve in the Excise Department for some time mechanically come to the top as Assistant Commissioners, and because you have prohibited importation of fresh people into the department efficiency is to some extent bound to suffer. I am quite aware of the fact that in these days of motor car travelling the Excise Commissioner will be able to travel to all parts of the country. Repeated visits of the Assistant Commissioner of a suitable status are different from the occasional visits of the Commissioner.

With regard to the appointments of peons and other subordinates, the powers now conferred upon the Assistant Commissioners are not to the benefit of the State. If the police constables can be recruited only by the Police Commissioner, I fail to see why these officers in the making should be given the patronage of appointing people. The result is, there is no uniformity of equipment. Any domestic servant, any cook, who happens to get the sympathy of the Assistant Commissioner, happens to be appointed as an exciseman whether he has got the physical or other fitness or not. I am glad to mention in this connection that the pay of the subordinates in the Excise Department has been raised. There is no act of greater justice that the Travancore Government can do. The subordinates of the Excise Department are in a unique position of difficulty They have not even got the sympathies of the public. I believe all of us who have read *Heart of Midlothian* will find that even in very civilised countries a smuggler is looked upon as an object of sympathy and not of disgust. Therefore you will find that the excise peons do not get at least the respect commanded by the policeman. His condition is not looked upon with sympathy.

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PRESIDENT: It is time.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum cum Nedumangad*): I am finishing, Sir. The lot of these poor people is hard indeed. They have very hard work. They have not only to struggle with thiefs and smugglers. They have also to struggle with darkness in whose company they have to move about. That the pay of such men has been raised is very creditable to the State. But if we want to get the full benefit, I am emphatically of opinion that the present Assistant Commissioners would not do. There should be superior officers who could legitimately aspire to the post of Excise Commissioner. I am suggesting this for the consideration of the House, and I may add that, unless assisted by higher officers the Excise Commissioner, however active and intelligent he might be, will not be able to discharge his work satisfactorily. Therefore, I beg to remind the House that the defects are of the system and not of the men.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): Though I confess my inability to speak with authority upon the subject under discussion, I would also raise my humble voice in support of the noble cause of temperance in view of the fact that some friends on the non-official side may find it not quite discreet to raise their voice in their anxiety to combat the "internal enemy" because of their trepidation at the prevailing practice in some of the constituencies which are the stronghold of alcoholic triumph. Sir, the fight against the internal enemy is a serious necessity and I am in full sympathy with all that has been said by the previous speakers in that direction. With respect to the question raised by Mr. Madhava Variar, I had my own doubts whether it may not be advisable to close the shops during day-time. For, as a matter of fact, it causes greater inconvenience to the public at large. For if drinking habits are occasionally indulged in during night time, it may probably be due to a desire for secrecy, and further, in some cases, it may be that some people may think they may go conveniently to sleep after drinking. If that is the real object in drinking during the night—I myself am not in a position to say, it is so—it is better to allow the shops during night time instead of their being a great inconvenience to the general public during day time.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): Will Mr. P. K. Narayana Pillai tell me whether there is not the chance of the man drunk coming home and beating his wife and children ? (*Laughter.*)

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): If he is a confirmed drunkard, that may be done during day time also. That does not mend matters. I hope the question raised by Mr. Madhava Variar regarding the possibilities of bettering the situation will be considered. Then he said that in all the civilised countries the shops were closed during night-time. But that assurance is not rested upon anything like a solid foundation, as he was unable to give us any information of the practice obtaining in England and other places.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur cum Pattanamtitta*): A point of personal explanation, Sir. What I told him was that

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[Mr. P, K. Narayana Pllai.]

in the night thieves and other persons may come to the shops and may create hubbub and there are very many serious crimes taking place near the shops.

PRESIDENT: He is criticising your statement.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI *(Ambalapuzha)*: I am coming to the other statement, that thieves would collect during the night and drink at liquor shops and then will commit thefts here and there. If that were so, if under the influence of liquor people are going to commit thefts, they are capable of being detected easily. (*Laughter*). I think this is something to our advantage. Certainly I am not advocating the question of drinking at all. I am preferring the lesser evil of the two.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): I am also in favour of closing the shops during day and night.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): I am very glad to hear that. I thought that Mr. Madhava Variar was of opinion that the shops might be kept open during the day and closed at night.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): What I said was that the rules are not observed.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): In consideration of the nuisance, I would request the Government to consider the rules in this matter also, going into the question more fully as to why people are addicted to drinking during night. The other question I should like to place before the House, as I see from the statistics, relates to import of foreign liquor. In the year 1096, 834 gallons were imported into Travancore through Alleppey; in 1097 the quantity seems to have gone up very high to 2,392 gallons.

MR. JOHN MACKIE (*Planters*): What liquor?

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): Foreign liquor. So that it is practically about three times the quantity of the previous year.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): For which year?

PRESIDENT: 1097.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI: (*Ambalapuzha*): I have got the figures for 1096 and 1097. I may refer you to page 28. There you will see the quantity of foreign liquor imported for 1096 by sea through Alleppey on payment of duty is 834 gallons, and that for 1097, 2,392. Surely, that is an alarming figure, whatever be the indulgence with which we may view the play of indigenous liquor in our midst.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): The quantity imported in 1097 showed a decrease, the imports being 5,325 and 1,523 7 gallons for 1096 and 1097 respectively.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): I am referring to page 28 of the Statistics of Travancore printed in 1097, issued and published by Government.

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MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): The member is speaking of the Alleppey Port alone. The total is less.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): The member is referring to the small figures elsewhere.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Just look underneath.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): From British India the quantity imported is becoming less and less. I fear it is because of the consumption there. (*Laughter.*) Well, no doubt, that is an alarming figure, and if this year also the quantity is going to rise, that indicates serious things.

PRESIDENT: As the Excise Commissioner says, it has gone down.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): It is an achievement in it self. (*Laughter*). This foreign invasion by foreign liquor is a more dangerous thing and I raise my voice of protest against it. And it ought to be the endeavour of Government to check it as far as possible. This is what I have to offer by way of general observation.

MR. K. C. MAMMEN MAPPILLAI (*Commerce and Industries, North*): I should like first of all to make a few observations with regard to someside remarks by Mr. P. K. Narayana Pillai and Mr. Madhava Variar about day and night drinking. It seems to me that the chief reason for the closing of liquor shops during night time, as desired by social reformers, is to prevent labourers from spending all their time and earnings in liquor shops. If that is an object of the social reformers it is worthy of support by this House. With regard to the replacement of arack by toddy, though I have no personal experience, I should like to say that in certain taluks where toddy was formerly unknown and arrack was exclusively drunk, arrack has disappeared and toddy has taken its place for two reasons. First of all, it is cheaper and secondly, it is a larger bellyful for the same amount of money and therefore people prefer that. Also if toddy be allowed to ferment for a sufficiently long time, its effect upon the brain is very much stronger than arrack. So arrack is giving way before the invasion of toddy.

With regard to the policy of the Excise Department the Government of our country in common with the Governments of other countries, always claim that their earnest desire is to restrict the consumption of liquor and that they are not at all desirous of gaining any revenue out of this consumption fraught with grave danger to the health and prosperity of the people. Also it is claimed that any sudden restriction in the consumption of legitimate liquor will result in an increase in illicit manufacture of intoxicating liquors. All these are more or less true, and they have to be taken into account in framing the Excise policy of the Government. But considering the very large revenue derived from the Excise Department and the straits to which all Governments in these days are subject in balancing their budgets, one might be pardoned if one is sometimes sceptical about the energy of the

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department in giving effect to this very enlightened policy of the Government. When one sees the operations of the department throughout the country, one cannot find any sincere desire or endeavour really to restrict the consumption of liquor. The one desire of the officers of the Excise Department, I don't say it refers only to Travancore but it is applicable to all other countries also—the one outstanding feature of the Excise Department is the attempt to make revenue without paying much attention to the temperance aspect of the qrestion. Sometimes remedies to bring about temperance may be worse than the disease itself. Therefore I am not one of those who advocate any drastic measures unless the country and the people are prepared for these things. I suggest that the Excise Department should cautiously try the policy of drastic reduction in certain selected localities. Non-official advisers should be appointed in order to check the number of shops and also the consumption of liquor. We are told that the number of shops in the country is being reduced every year. But I have reason to fear that though the number of shops on records may be reduced, the number of places where liquor is available are not reduced. In most villages liquor is available for sale in unlicensed premises.

Mr. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*) : Can the member tell me whether it is in the area under the independent shop syetem or elsewhere?

Mr. K. C. MAMMEN MAPPILLAI (*Commerce and Industries, North*) : Indian shops. If persons who are sincerely desirous to bring about temperance reform are chosen in one or two selected areas with due discrimination by the Government and if they are given some voice in an advisory capacity, to watch the places where liquors are sold and also to advise the department as to the location of shops, the persons to whom licenses should be granted etc., it may be possible, to effect some good. At least it is worth while to try the experiment in one or two areas. If the system is found to be successful, this may be extended gradually. I do not know whether Travancore is sufficiently advanced to try the system of local option which has tried and found useful in some of the advanced countries Europe and America. It may be worth while for the Department to try these two measures in a very cautious manner in certain selected areas.

Mr. T. KUMARA PILLAI (*Eraniel* cum *Vilavankod*) : എന്റെ സഹപ്രവർത്തകന്മാരിൽ പലരും കാസ്സുങ്ങളിലും തിരുവനന്തപുരംമുതൽ വടക്കോട്ടുള്ള കഥകളാണ് ഇവിടെ പ്രസ്താവിക്കാൻ ഇടയായത്. എന്നാൽ ഇതുകൊണ്ടു തെക്കൻതിരുവിതാംകൂറിൽ വളരെ കുറവുണ്ടെന്നോ അല്ലെങ്കിൽ വളരെ ഭേദമുണ്ടെന്നോ ഉള്ള തെറ്റിദ്ധാരണ വന്നുപോയേക്കുമെന്നുള്ള സംശയത്താലാണ് ഞാനും രണ്ടുവാക്കു പറയാമെന്നുദ്ദേശിക്കുന്നത്. കള്ളുഷാപ്പുകളുടെ തിരുവനന്തപുരത്തിനു തെക്കോ വടക്കോ എവിടെയാണ് കൂടുതലെ

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ന്നള്ളത് അനുവദിച്ചതന്നെ അറിയേണ്ടിയിരിക്കുന്നു. മധുവജ്ജനം കൊണ്ടോ മറേറതെങ്കിലും തരത്തിലൊ കൂടി കുറഞ്ഞുപോകണമെന്നു എല്ലാ ജനങ്ങൾക്കും അത്യാഗ്രഹമുണ്ട്. അതു സാധിച്ചുകിട്ടുന്നപക്ഷം രാജ്യത്തിനും ജനങ്ങൾക്കും ഒരു മഹാഭാഗ്യമാണെന്നു സമ്മതിക്കാവുന്നതാണ്. മധുരമജ്ജനംകൊണ്ടു കുറഞ്ഞില്ലെങ്കിലും അതു വർദ്ധിക്കാതിരിക്കണമെന്നാണ് എന്റെയും അഭിപ്രായം. തിരുവനന്തപുരം ടൌണിൽ രാത്രിയിൽ ഷാപ്പുകൾ തുറന്നു വില്പന നടത്തുന്നു എന്നും എക്സൈസ് കമ്മീഷണർ ക്രൂടിവരുന്നപക്ഷം അദ്ദേഹത്തെ കാണിച്ചുകൊടുക്കാമെന്നും മിസ്റ്റർ വാസ്സർ പറയുകയുണ്ടായി. അങ്ങനെ ഇവിടെ നടക്കുന്നതിനപ്പുറമുള്ള അപൂർവ്വമായൊ അത്ഭുതമായൊ ഗണിക്കേണ്ടതില്ല. ഇതിന്റെ അധികം ഉപദ്രവം ഉള്ളതു നാട്ടുകളിലാണ്. ഉൾനാട്ടുകളിൽപോയാൽ രാത്രി അടയ്ക്കുന്ന ഷാപ്പുകൾ വളരെ കുറവാണ്. എന്റെ വീട്ടിനു സമീപത്തു പലേ ഷാപ്പുകൾ ഉണ്ട്. ഞാൻ രാത്രികാലങ്ങളിൽ ദൂരസ്ഥലങ്ങളിൽ പോയിട്ടു പിന്നീടും ഒന്നും മണിക്കു തിരിയെ വരുന്നസമയങ്ങളിൽ ഷാപ്പുകൾ തുറന്നിരിക്കുന്നതും, കച്ചവടം ചെയ്യുവരുന്നതും ലഹളകൾ ഉണ്ടാകുന്നതും കണ്ടിട്ടുണ്ടു.

എന്നാൽ ഇതിനെ ഞാൻ കണ്ടുഎന്നു പറഞ്ഞവസാനിപ്പിക്കുന്നതു നന്നായിരിക്കയില്ല. ഒരുദിവസം അവിടത്തെസ്ഥലം തഹശീൽ മജിസ്ട്രേട്ടായ ഉദ്യോഗസ്ഥൻ ഒരു ചേലത്താനുവന്ന അവസരത്തിൽ രാത്രി 12 മണിക്കുമേൽ എന്റെ വീട്ടിൽ വരികയുണ്ടായി.

Mr. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Will the member be pleased to tell me whether he has, at any time, given information to the local officers?

Mr. T. KUMARA PILLAI (*Eraniel* cum *Vilavakod*): What is the use of giving information to the local officers?

Mr. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): If the local officer did not take any action, then we can take action.

Mr. T. KUMARA PILLAI (*Eraniel* cum *Vilavankod*): I do not think he wants a reply to that statement.

അദ്ദേഹവും ഞാനുമായിട്ടു രാത്രി പത്തുമണിക്കു വെളിയിൽ ഇറങ്ങിയപ്പോൾ കുറെപേർ കള്ളുഷാപ്പിൽനിന്നും വന്ന അദ്ദേഹത്തോടുപറഞ്ഞത് അവിടെ ഒരാളെ അടിച്ചു ബോധം കെടുത്തിഇട്ടിരിക്കുന്നു എന്നും വന്നുനോക്കണമെന്നുമായിരുന്നു. ഞങ്ങൾ അവിടെചെന്നു നോക്കിയപ്പോൾ കള്ളുഷാപ്പുതുറന്നിരിക്കയും ധാരാളം ആളുകൾ കൂടിയിരിക്കയും ഒരാളെ അടിച്ചുബോധം കെടുത്തി ഇട്ടിരിക്കയും ചെയ്തതുകാണാ

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നിടയായി. എന്നാൽ ഇതൊരു മജിസ്ട്രേട്ടുകൂടികണ്ട ഒരുസംഗതിയാണ്. രാത്രികാലങ്ങളിൽ ഷാപ്പുകൾ നടക്കുന്നു എന്നുള്ളതു തെയ്യുമായിട്ട് എനിക്കുപറയാൻ സാധിക്കും. രാത്രിയിലുള്ളവില്പന അവിടെ ഓരോദിവസവും വർദ്ധിച്ചുവരികയാണ് ചെയ്യുന്നതു. ഇങ്ങനെ രാത്രികാലങ്ങളിൽ കള്ളുഷാപ്പുകൾ തുറന്നു വച്ചുകൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്നതിൽനിന്നും മോഷണം ധാരാളം ഉണ്ടാകുന്നു എന്നും മിസ്റ്റർ വായ്ർ പറയുകയുണ്ടായി. ഇത് ഉൾനാടുകളിൽ താമസിക്കുന്നവർക്കാണ് അധികവും ഉണ്ടാകുന്നതു്. രാപകൽ അദ്ധ്വാനിച്ചുണ്ടാക്കുന്നതിൽ പലസാമാനങ്ങളും മോഷ്ടിച്ചുകൊണ്ടുപോകുന്നു. ഇതിനു കല്ലൂളം താലൂക്കിൽ കോതനല്ലൂർ പകുതിയെ ദൃഷ്ടാന്തമായി എടുക്കാം. അവിടെ രണ്ടുപ്രധാനചന്തകൾ ഉണ്ടു്. മോഷ്ടിച്ചുകൊണ്ടുവരുന്ന സാമാനങ്ങളിൽ കള്ളുഷാപ്പിൽ വിറ്റു കുടിച്ചതിന്റെ ബാക്കി ഈ ചന്തകളിൽ വിറ്റഴിച്ചുവരുന്നത സാധാരണമാണ്. ഈ രണ്ടുചന്തകളിലും കാലത്ത് അഞ്ചുമണിയോടുകൂടി കച്ചവടം തീർന്നുപോകുന്നതാണ്. ഈ സംഗതിയെപ്പറ്റി ദിവാൻപേഷ്കാർമുതൽ പോലീസ് ഇൻസ്പെക്ടർവരെയുള്ള ഉദ്യോഗസ്ഥന്മാരോടു പറകയും അവർ വേണ്ടപോലെ പ്രയത്നപ്പെടുകയും ചെയ്തിട്ടുണ്ടു്. അവരുടെ പ്രയത്നം ഫലപ്പെടാതെ ഇന്നും ആ ചന്തകൾ കാലത്ത് അഞ്ചു മണിയോടുകൂടി കച്ചവടം നടത്തിപ്പിരിഞ്ഞുപോകുന്നു.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): May I ask the member if any of the shop-keepers have been convicted for having stolen articles?

PRESIDENT: Not stolen; what he says is that the articles are bought by he shop-keepers from them.

MR. T. KUMARA PILLAI (*Eraniel* cum *Vilavancod*): Their own articles as well as stolen articles.

ഇനി എനിക്കൊരു സംഗതി പറയാനുള്ളതു ഡിപ്പാർട്ടുമെൻറു പരിഷ്കാരം നടത്തീട്ടുള്ളതിൽ ഗവർൺമെൻറു കാണിച്ചുവച്ചിയ അബദ്ധത്തെപ്പറ്റിയാണു്. അതായതു എക്സൈസ്ഭരണത്തിന് ഏറ്റവും അത്യാവശ്യമായിട്ടുള്ള പെറ്റിയാഫീസറന്മാരേയും ശിപായിമാരേയും കുറച്ച് ആദായം ഉണ്ടാക്കി സബ് ഇൻസ്പെക്ടറന്മാരെ നിയമിച്ചിട്ടുള്ളതു്. ഈ നിയമനത്താൽഎക്സൈസ് ഭരണനയത്തിനു വലുതായ ഒരു ഉടവു തട്ടീട്ടുണ്ടെന്നു പലകല അളുകളും അറിഞ്ഞുകഴിഞ്ഞിരിക്കുന്നു. ഇതിനു കമ്മീഷണറെ പ്രേരിപ്പിച്ചിട്ടുള്ളതു് ഇങ്ങനെ ഒരു ലാഭം കാണിക്കാത്തപക്ഷം

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സബ് ഇൻസ്പെക്ടർന്മാരുടെ നിയമനത്തെ ഈ സഭ തടയുമെന്നുള്ള ഭയമാണ്. പെറിയാഫീസറന്മാരേയും ശിപായിമാരേയും വർദ്ധിപ്പിക്കുകയല്ലാതെ കുറയ്ക്കാൻ പാടില്ലാത്തതാണ്. സബ് ഇൻസ്പെക്ടറന്മാരുടെ നിയമനത്താൽ ആശിച്ചിരുന്ന അല്പമായ ഒരു ഫലംപോലും സിദ്ധിച്ചിട്ടില്ല. ഈ അവസ്ഥ ജനങ്ങളും എക്സൈസ് കമ്മീഷണരും അറിഞ്ഞു കഴിഞ്ഞിരിക്കുന്നു. താമസിയാതെ തന്നെ ഗവർൺമെൻറിന്റെ ശ്രദ്ധയിൽ എത്തുന്നതും ആണ്.

ഇൻസ്പെക്ടറന്മാരും സബ് ഇൻസ്പെക്ടറന്മാരും തമ്മിലടി ധാരാളം തുടങ്ങീട്ടുണ്ട്. ഇതു ഞങ്ങൾക്കൊക്കെ അറിയാം. ചില ദുഷ്ടാന്തങ്ങൾ എക്സൈസ് കമ്മീഷണരുടെ അടുത്തും എത്തിട്ടുണ്ട്. ഇവർ തമ്മിലുള്ള വഴക്കുകൾ തീർക്കുന്നതിനു കമ്മീഷണരുടേയും അസിസ്റ്റൻറ് കമ്മീഷണരുടേയും വിലയേറിയ സമയം ധാരാളം ചിലവാക്കേണ്ടതായി വന്നിരിക്കുന്നു. ഈ കുഴപ്പങ്ങൾ ഗവർൺമെൻറിന്റെ ദൃഷ്ടിയിൽ എത്തുന്നതും ഗവർൺമെൻറിന്റെ വിലയേറിയ സമയം ഇതിലേക്കു വിനിയോഗിക്കേണ്ടിവരുന്നതുമാണ്.

മറ്റൊരുകാര്യം എനിക്കു പറവാനുള്ളതു ഡിപ്പാർട്ട്മെൻറിലെ നിയമനങ്ങളെ പറ്റിയാണ്. ഈ സംഗതിയിൽ വേണ്ടപോലെ ആലോചിച്ചു പ്രവൃത്തിക്കേണ്ടതാണ്. ഇപ്പോൾ സബ് ഇൻസ്പെക്ടറന്മാരെ നിയമിക്കുന്നു എന്നിരിക്കട്ടെ. അവരുടെ സർവീസുനോക്കിയൊ പരീക്ഷാവിജയം നോക്കിയൊ അല്ല നിയമിക്കുന്നത് എന്ന് അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ നിയമനംകൊണ്ടുതന്നെ വരുന്നു. ഡിപ്പാർട്ട്മെൻറിൽ ഉള്ള ആളുകളുടെ സർവീസിനേയൊ പരീക്ഷാവിജയത്തേയൊ തോതാക്കി നിയമനം നടത്തിയിരുന്നുവെങ്കിൽ അതിലേക്ക് ഒരുസമാധാനം ഉണ്ടായിരിക്കുമായിരുന്നു. ഈ യോഗ്യതകളെ അടിസ്ഥാനപ്പെടുത്തീട്ടല്ല സബ് ഇൻസ്പെക്ടറന്മാരെ നിയമിച്ചിട്ടുള്ളത്. അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ സഞ്ചാരത്തിലും മറ്റു വിധത്തിലും എങ്ങനേയൊ കുറെ ആളുകളെ കണ്ടുമുട്ടി അവർ യോഗ്യന്മാരാണെന്നുള്ള മുൻകൂട്ടിയുള്ള മുഷ്ടിയോടുകൂടി നിയമനങ്ങൾ കഴിച്ചുകൂട്ടിയിരിക്കുന്നു. ഈ നിയമനങ്ങൾ പലർക്കും മനോവേദനകരം ഉണ്ടാക്കീട്ടുള്ളതും അവരുടെ സങ്കടങ്ങൾ ഇതേവരെ തീർത്തിട്ടില്ലാത്തതും ആകുന്നു. ഉദ്യോഗദാനവിഷയത്തിൽ കമ്മീഷണർ ഈ നയം വച്ചുകൊണ്ടിരിക്കയാണെങ്കിൽ ഡിപ്പാർട്ട്മെൻറിലെ കാര്യക്ഷമതയ്ക്കു വലുതായ കേടു പറയുന്നതാണ്. ഇക്കാര്യവും കാലക്രമംകൊണ്ടു ഗവർൺമെൻറിനു ബോദ്ധ്യപ്പെടാതിരിക്കയില്ല. ഡിപ്പാർട്ട്മെൻറധികൃതന്മാർക്കു നിയമനാധികാരം കൊടുക്കുന്നതു ഗവർൺ

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[Mr. A. J. Van Ross.]

മെൻറിൽ നിന്നും വേണ്ടപോലെ ആലോചിച്ചു ചെയ്യേണ്ടതാണ്. അങ്ങനെ അവക്കു കൊടുക്കുന്ന അധികാരങ്ങളെ ഒരിക്കലും ദുരുപയോഗപ്പെടുത്താതെ ഗവർൺമെൻറു സൂക്ഷിക്കേണ്ടതാണ്.

ഇനി എനിക്കൊരു സംഗതികൂടി പറവാനുണ്ട്. വ്യാജമായി കള്ളു, ചാരായം ഇവ ഉണ്ടാക്കുന്നതു് ഓരോ ദിവസവും വർദ്ധിച്ചുവരികയാണ് ചെയ്യുന്നതു്. മുൻ കാലങ്ങളിൽ എക്സൈസ് ഡിപ്പാർട്ടുമെൻറിലെ ഭരണനിഷ്കർഷകൊണ്ടു് ഓരോസ്ഥലങ്ങളിൽ വാറ്റിവന്നിരുന്ന യന്ത്രങ്ങളും അവരവരുടെ തട്ടിൻെറ മുകളിൽ നിക്ഷേപിക്കേണ്ടതായി വന്നിട്ടുണ്ട്. ഇടക്കാലം മുതൽ ആ യന്ത്രങ്ങളെ തപ്പിപ്പിടിച്ചു അറസ്റ്റു ചെയ്തു് ഇപ്പോൾ യഥേഷ്ടം ഉപയോഗിച്ചുവരുന്ന എന്നു ധൈര്യമായി എനിക്കു പറയാവുന്നതാണ്. ഇതു ധൈര്യമായി ഈ കൌൺസിലിൽ പറയുന്നതിനു ഇടയാക്കീട്ടുള്ളതു് എക്സൈസ്വകുപ്പിലെ ഭരണം ഓരോ ദിവസവും ഉഷിച്ചു ഇത്തരം പ്രവൃത്തികൾ ചെയ്യുന്നതിന് അവരെ പ്രേരിപ്പിച്ചിട്ടുള്ളതാണ്. ഡിപ്പാർട്ടുമെൻറിലെ ഈ നിലയെ ഗവർൺമെൻറു നല്ലപോലെ അന്വേഷിച്ചു ശരിയാക്കേണ്ട കാലം അതിക്രമിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നു എന്നു മാത്രമേ എനിക്കിപ്പോൾ പറവാനുള്ളൂ.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Sir, several very serious charges have been brought against the administration of my department, and I am glad that an opportunity has been given me to explain away what I think to be a misapprehension in several cases.

Mr. Raman Pillai has said that the abkari revenue is falling year by year. The abkari revenue, I admit, has fallen in 1097, compared with the revenue yielded in 1096. But Mr. Raman Pillai has forgotten that the revenue increased by Rs. 13 lakhs from what it was in 1095.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): Is it due to any particular supervision on the part of the Excise Department?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Whatever it is, the consumption of arrack rises or falls with seasonal and trade conditions. A large increase in one year is usually followed by a fall in the next year. With the boom in trade in 1095, as may be seen from the Administration Report, the consumption of arrack rose considerably. If people have money to spend, the consumption of arrack rises.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): May I know from Mr. Van Ross whether the trade condition in Travancore has ever been fluctuating; and whether on the other hand it was not steadily increasing?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I must correct a misapprehension. The figures in my report are the figures that represent

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the tariff value of the goods. The *chowkeys* are not in a position to obtain the real market values. But I may say that the market value has been very poor for our articles of produce.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): I am referring to the increase of trade as given in the statistics volume.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): The figures in the statistics volume are those that I supplied. These figures represent only the tariff value.

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Neyyattinkara*): May I know whether the customs revenue is an indication of the progress of trade?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): The customs revenue is based on the tariff value.

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Neyyattinkara*): I want to know whether, for the determination of the so-called economic stress, the returns in the customs revenue are not to be taken into consideration.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): The quantity in goods is correct. But the value given is not the correct market value, because the customs officers are not able to know the market value.

PRESIDENT. Generally the tariff value is not altered.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): Does not the tariff value depend upon the market value?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Generally it is so. But the market values fell sometime back and it is not feasible for the department to alter tariff values now and then with the variations in market values. We are in hopes that, with the improvement in the condition of trade in Europe, the market values will go up and there will be no necessity to alter the tariff values. The customs figures show that there has been no depression in the value of the trade because we keep to the old tariff values.

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Neyyattinkara*): May I know from the Excise Commissioner the data upon which he comes to the conclusion about market values?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I would request the member to see the figures in the Madras dailies. These news papers give the figures relating to trade.

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Neyyattinkara*): Our trade?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): It is common knowledge that the market value of our products has come down since 1095—the value of our cocoanuts, *copra*, etc.

MR. M. K. KHADIR PILLAI (*Nominated*): The price of ginger?

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[Mr. N. Padmanabha Pillai.]

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Ginger is the only article that has gone up in price recently.

MR. M. K. KHADIR PILLAI (*Nominated*): How many times?

PRESIDENT: We are speaking of 1097.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum cum Nedumangad*): I wish to know from the Excise Commissioner whether the customs house figures are not the best test to find out the value of trade.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Ordinarily it would be, since the tariff values usually approximate to market values.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): May I know if the customs reports show the actual figures?

PRESIDENT: That depends upon the tariff value, which remains the same.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): Does that not show that there is less of quantity manufactured and sold?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I did not say that there is a less quantity manufactured. But the value of the same quantity is very much less.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): How does the customs report show an increase?

PRESIDENT: Because the tariff is higher.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum cum Nedumangad*): I wish to ask Mr. Van Ross whether, when both the exports and the imports show a rise, the balance does not show a favourable condition of trade.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): The direct imports into our State do not give a correct indication of the purchasing power of the people, since the imports are mainly for Government and for some large firms.

I will proceed. When the economic condition of our people is low, naturally the consumption of liquor will fall. But I do not say that the whole fall is due to this. It is also due to the reduction in the issue strength of liquor. As soon as the issue strength was reduced from twenty-five to thirty and from thirty to thirty-five, we immediately observed a fall in the consumption, and reports were received of recrudescence in illicit distillation. It is well and good for the House to say that the Excise Department should put down illicit practice. This cannot be done in a day. Special steps are now taken to check the recrudescence in distillation. Special parties were sent to Karinkulam and Neyyattinkara where it was said that illicit distillation was rampant.

MR. N. PADMANABHA PILLAI (*Karunagapalli*): How long has this department been in existence now?

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MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): This department was reorganised in 1084.

So long as we have people who are prepared to indulge in illicit liquor, so long will malpractices exist and the Excise Department will continue to try to put them down. But there are practical difficulties. For example, we cannot rush into a house without proper information that illicit distillation is going on there. We should get information and people are very slow to give us any information.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): I wish to ask Mr. Van Ross how many cases of illicit distillation were detected by the Assistant Excise Commissioners during 1098—I mean personally detected?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I cannot answer him now. I shall get the figures only at the end of the year.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): Now that Mr. Van Ross is not able to give the information, I may ask another question. Can Mr. Van Ross give any *one* instance of an Assistant Commissioner having *personally* detected any case?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I have just received a report that Assistant Commissioner Mr. Nilakandan and Inspector Mr. Govinda Pillai have been assaulted in detecting a case of illicit distillation at Quilon. That one instance will show that Assistant Excise Commissioners do detect cases themselves.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): Was it not at Tangasseri?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Not at Tangasseri, but near it.

I said that the fall in the consumption of arrack is due to illicit distillation. But I must join issue with some of the members when they say that the fall was due to the introduction of Sub-Inspectors. These officers did not exist in 1097. They were introduced only in Tulam 1098.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): Do not a fall in the revenue and a fall in the number of cases detected indicate that the supervision exercised by the department is inefficient?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I am prepared to explain that it does not show that. There was a strong wave of the temperance movement; the country was greatly affected; and there was a fall in the consumption of arrack. In 1097, the anti-tapping movement was very strong and many of the shop-keepers had made up their minds not to take up any shops in the next year and consequently they evaded payment of *kist* in 1097. Some of the officers became nervous and were reluctant to enforce preventive measures in certain areas as they thought such action would alienate the sympathies of the shop-keepers entirely.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*) Are those nervous people still in service?

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[Mr. A. J. Van Ross.]

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I am trying to bring those nervous people to my view of the matter. I have since informed them of my views and things are now very much better.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): I wish to know whether, if the shop-keepers kept away from paying, how they now come forward.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): They kept away then, but they have come forward now.

Mr. Raman Pillai said that my reasons are all fallacious. I would say that it is a fact reported to me by my Assistant Commissioners that with the reduction in the issue strength of arrack many of the poor, finding that the weak liquor did not satisfy them, gave up arrack and went in for toddy.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): Will Mr. Van Ross please say if arrack is not more intoxicating than toddy?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I am not in a position to tell him.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): We have a right to know the Commissioner's expert opinion on the matter.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I am sorry I have not got the information.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): From personal experience?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I have no personal experience.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): I wish to know if any analysis of toddy has been made.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Analysis has been made of arrack.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): Not of arrack. I wish to know about the analysis of toddy.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): No analysis has been made of toddy. All I can say is that, when toddy is taken in excess, it intoxicates.

With regard to the criticism of Mr. Raman Pillai, I am glad that I have an opportunity of explaining the situation to him. Before I introduced the Sub-Inspectors, preventive work was not satisfactorily attended to. An Inspector was in charge of a range with a couple of Petty Officers posted at either end of the range. I was myself in charge of divisions for seven or eight years. I found that the work with such a small and low-paid staff could not be done satisfactorily. All cases were not reported; the Inspector was not able to supervise and control the range satisfactorily along with his many other duties.

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MR. C. P. KOCHUKUNJU PILLAI (*Kottarakara* cum *Kunnattur*): Did he make any representation to the then Excise Commissioner?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I have no information.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): If the Inspector is not able to have control over the petty officer, will he be able to have any control over the Sub-Inspector? He is a more highly paid officer.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I did not say that he was not able to control the Petty Officer. I said that he had no time to do his work.

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Neyyattinkara*): Of the total number of Sub-Inspectors appointed, how many petty officers were promoted to that rank?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I have not got the exact figures.

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Neyyattinkara*): He can say roughly.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Over 75 per cent. of them are petty officers and clerks. I can submit figures showing the various items of work done by the Sub-Inspectors.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): I would point out that these statistics have been furnished in answer to an interpellation.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): But these figures were not given in the answer. I will give the figures up to the end of Mithunam 1098. In several of the ranges, detection work showed an increase of from 50 to 340 per cent.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): How many cases have been brought to conviction?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): The member may take it from me that almost the usual percentage of the cases of conviction has been obtained.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): Will Mr. Van Ross say whether these offenders have in fact anything to do with tapping?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Many of these men are connected with the tapping profession.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): How many cases were contested?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I cannot say exactly. Almost all the cases are contested.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): How many of the cases mentioned by him relate to illicit distillation and how many of them to tapping?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): In Muvattupuzha we had 58 cases last year as against 185 this year, *i. e.*, an increase of

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[Mr. A. J. Van Ross.]

219 per cent; in Kunnatnad we had 63 last year, and 98 this year, *i.e.*, an increase of 56 per cent; in Alangad, 27 against 41, or an increase of 51 per cent; in Devicolam (North) a percentage increase of 25; in Nagercoil 20 against 44, or 120 per cent; and in Shencottah 180 per cent.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): How many of these were tapping cases and how many cases of illicit distillation?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I shall give the figures relating to grave offences. 294 grave offences were detected.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): What are grave offences?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Grave offences mean illicit distillation and illicit possession of arrack. The Sub-Inspectors in addition to this have marked over 36,000 trees and have made 270 and odd house searches.

MR. J. JOHN NIDIRY (*Changanachery* cum *Minachil*): What are the offences that are not grave?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Ordinary possession of toddy. The possession of toddy does not seriously affect the revenue because we get tree-tax.

MR. M.R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): How many cases were brought to conviction?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I forget that. In Nagercoil, out of 35 cases charged in 1098, 26 cases ended in conviction. In Kalkulam—

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): Will Mr. Van Ross tell us how many of the people convicted were old offenders of the department? When the annual report is prepared and printed, this information may also go along with that.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): That may be done, if possible.

MR. N. PADMANABHA PILLAI (*Karunagapalli*): May I ask if there is lack of harmony between the Inspectors and their subordinates?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): It was an apprehension expressed by some of the members at the last budget debate that there will be disharmony between these Inspectors and the Sub-Inspectors. But I may say that there is no foundation for any such apprehension.

MR. T. KUMARA PILLAI (*Eraniel* cum *Vilavankod*): Has the Commissioner got information about the Pattanapuram taluk?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): I have not had any report about any quarrel there. I may assure the Council that I am in full sympathy with all the members in regard to the necessity of

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putting down malpractices. But I must once more say that the country must be ready for it. Yesterday one of my Assistant Commissioners was assaulted very badly. Certainly that does not show that the country is prepared for the abolition of the sale of liquor. We are working under great difficulties. We have not got any one to back us in the matter of detecting cases.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum cum Nedumangad*): Can Mr. Van Ross assure the Council that the assault was not due to the white liver of these officers?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): Will the member please repeat his question? I did not hear him.

PRESIDENT: Cowardice.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS (*Excise Commissioner*): They would have run away if they were cowards and would not have remained to be assaulted.

MR. M. N. PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): I wish to know from Mr. Van Ross to what he has to say about *kathipanam* referred to by Mr. Ramakrishna Pillai.

PRESIDENT: I may now tell the House that the extended time allowed for the Demand has elapsed. The remaining motions therefore lapse. I present Demand III—Excise, Rs. 5·17 lakhs for the acceptance of the House.

The motion was carried and the grant was made.

Motions 73-114.

The following motions lapsed, the time limit allotted for the Demand having expired:—

MR. N. RAMAKRISHNA PILLAI:

73. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 18,132 for clerks by Rs. 6,000.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI:

74. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 18,132 for clerks by Rs. 966.

MR. V. KUNJUKRISHŃA PILLAI:

75 To omit the allotment of Rs. 10,000 for travelling allowance.

MR. V. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI:

76. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 1,500 for petty construction and repairs by Rs. 1,000.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI:

77. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 1,500 for petty construction and repairs by Rs. 1,000.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI:

78. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 850 for transport of opium and ganja by Rs. 300.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI:

79. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 2,020 for purchase and repair of furniture by Rs. 1,000.

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[Mr. T. Kumara Pillai.]

MR. V. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI :

80. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 2,500 for office expenses and miscellaneous by Rs. 1,500.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI :

81. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 2,500 for office expenses and miscellaneous by Rs. 1,300.

MR. T. KUMARA PILLAI :

82. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 11,089 for supplies, services and contingencies by Rs. 3,000.

MR. A. GOVINDA MENON :

83. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 11,089 for supplies, service and contingencies by Rs. 540.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI :

84. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 47,992 for Division Offices by Rs. 100.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI :

85. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 1,49,098 for Sub-Inspectors, etc., by Rs. 49,098

MR. C. P. KOCHUKUNJU PILLAI :

86. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 1,49,098 for Sub-Inspectors, etc., by Rs. 24,060.

MR. N. RAMAKRISHNA PILLAI :

87 To reduce the allotment of Rs. 1,49,098 for Sub-Inspectors by Rs. 24,060.

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI :

88. To reduce the allotment of Rs 1,49,098 for Sub-Inspectors, etc., by Rs. 24,060

MR. A. HOOGEWERF :

89. To omit the allotment of Rs. 24,060 on account of the pay of Sub-Inspectors.

MR. T. KUMARA PILLAI :

90. To omit the allotment of Rs. 24,060 on account of the pay of Sub-Inspectors.

MR. A. GOVINDA MENON :

91. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 1,49,098 for Sub-Inspectors, etc., by Rs. 19,860.

MR. V. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI :

92. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 10,000 for travelling allowance by Rs. 2,000.

MR. V. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI :

93. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 8,600 for petty construction and repairs by Rs. 5,000.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI :

94. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 8,600 for petty construction and repairs by Rs. 4,300.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI:

95. To omit the allotment of Rs. 1,000 for upkeep and maintenance of motor boat.

MR. T. KUMARA PILLAI :

96. To omit the allotment of Rs. 1,000 for upkeep and maintenance of motor boat.

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MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI:

97. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 2,250 for office expenses and miscellaneous by Rs. 1,250.

MR. V. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI:

98. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 2,250 for office expenses and miscellaneous by Rs. 1,000.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI:

99. To omit the allotment of Rs. 1,165 for the training of two Inspectors in Distillery work in Madras.

MR. N. RAMAKRISHNA PILLAI:

100. To reduce the allotment of Rs 2,31,900 for Ranges by Rs. 100.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR:

101. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 2,31,900 for Ranges by Rs. 100.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI:

102. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 500 for petty construction and repairs by Rs. 300.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI:

103. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 200 for office expenses and miscellaneous by Rs. 100.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI:

104. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 6,570 for Inspectors by Rs. 3,000.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI:

105. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 4,320 for Sub-Inspectors by Rs. 2,000.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI:

106. To omit the allotment of Rs. 656 for establishment of motor boat.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI:

107. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 3,190 for petty construction and repairs by Rs. 1,190.

MR. T. KUMARA PILLAI:

108. To omit the allotment of Rs. 1,200 for the upkeep and maintenance of motor boat.

MR. N. RAMAKRISHNA PILLAI:

109. To omit the allotment of Rs. 1,200 for the upkeep and maintenance of motor boat.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI:

110. To omit the allotment of Rs. 1,200 for the upkeep and maintenance of motor boat.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI:

111. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 2,000 for office expenses and miscellaneous by Rs. 1,000.

MR. N. RAMAKRISHNA PILLAI:

112. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 79,200 for Customs by Rs. 100.

MR. T. KUMARA PILLAI:

113. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 79,200 for Customs by Rs. 10.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF:

114. To reduce the total allotment of Rs. 5·17 lakhs under Demand III by Rs. 100.

The House adjourned at 5—26 P. M. to meet again at 11—30 A. M. on Wednesday the 8th August, 1923.

S. PARAMESVARA AIYAR,

Secretary to the Legislative Council.

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